



*Colonial Adventure and Achievement*

THE BRITISH IN INDIA



DELHI

The Durbar of 1911—the procession showing King George V passing through the Delhi Gate

# THE BRITISH IN INDIA

BY  
E. N. DAWSON

We sailed wherever ship could sail,  
We founded many a noble State—  
Pray God, our greatness may not fail,  
Through craven fear of being great!  
—TENNYSON.

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**THE BRITISH IN INDIA**

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## PREFACE

To all who shall read this little book, I would say, History is not to be thought of merely as a thing which we are obliged to learn, for the purpose of being able to pass examinations. It is the chronicle of the Human Race, and, so long as the Human Race endures, it will live and will prolong itself. It tells us of many changes in nations and kings and governments, and of the lives of their peoples; but it teaches, also, that through all the ages the nature of mankind has changed but little, if at all. Those who study History may learn why the life of peoples is that which we see around us to-day, and what it may be expected to be in the future.

This book covers a period short indeed, when compared with the history of India, which itself is but short, compared with that of mankind; the period between the first British settlement in India and the year 1937.

In reading this or any book about the history of India, it is important to have a map at hand. History cannot be understood without Geography.



# CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
NOTE ON THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA .	xi
I. THE ROUTE TO THE EAST . . . . .	I
2. THE BEGINNING OF THE ENGLISH COMPANY .	4
3. CONSOLIDATION . . . . .	10
4. THE ENGLISH AND THE FRENCH . . . . .	17
5. AFTER PLASSEY . . . . .	37
6. NON-INTERVENTION. . . . .	43
7. EXPANSION . . . . .	48
8. REFORMS AND PROBLEMS . . . . .	56
9. THE STATES . . . . .	62
10. THE MUTINY . . . . .	64
II. INDIA UNDER THE CROWN . . . . .	86
12. THE GREAT WAR, AND AFTER . . . . .	95



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE following are the titles of books which have been consulted —

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## NOTE ON THE PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

THE history of any country is always largely influenced by its physical geography, that is, the land in its natural state, its mountains, rivers, climate, soils, the kinds of animals and plants found in it, and the rainfall which has so much to do with these conditions. Space is not available here for more than a very brief sketch of these features and conditions as found in India.

Unlike Europe, India contains but few large cities and towns; in proportion to its immense population, these are few indeed. More than one-third of the people live in villages with under 500 people; it is a rural country, peopled by cultivators of the soil. There are parts where the inhabitants average more than 1000 to the square mile, and it is difficult for them to grow enough food from the land. In such parts, to quote the words of Kipling—

. . . life is a long-drawn question  
Between a crop and a crop,

and if the rainfall is short by a few inches the cultivators suffer distress.

A glance at the map of Asia shows India as the midmost, and the largest, of three great southward-pointing peninsulas. Its shape is that of a triangle based on the range of the Himalayas in the north, with its apex jutting out into the ocean. Most of its western side is bounded by the Arabian Sea, and most of its eastern side by the Bay of Bengal. The great triangle stretches northward from the 8th to the 36th parallel of latitude, that is, from the hottest part near the Equator to far within what is called the North Temperate Zone, an imaginary belt



round the Globe between the Tropic of Cancer and the Arctic Circle. The length of India from north to south is about 2000 miles. Its width (including Burma, which has recently become self-governing) is about the same. The coast-line of India measures about 3400 miles. On the third side is the wall of the mountains. The ranges as they turn towards the Arabian Sea are crossed by passes which have often admitted invading armies. On the north-east, India is bounded by a lower region of wild hill-country towards China and Tibet, and on the north-west by the States of Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The vast area thus defended by natural boundaries of land and water is rich in varieties of scenery and climate, from the icy peaks of the Himalayas to the low-lying regions, called deltas. The latter occur about the mouths of great rivers, and where the land is but a few inches above sea level.

For our purpose, we may divide India proper into three great tracts; first, that containing and immediately dominated by the Himalayan Mountains; second, the plains, beginning at their foothills, which form the basin of the Indus, the Ganges, and their tributaries; third, a triangular tableland, separated from the north by the Narbada River and the Vindhya Range, which divide the Gangetic valley from the Tamil States in the south of the peninsula.

The Himalayas form a double wall, and beyond this is a trough or valley in which the Indus, Sutlej, and Bramaputra begin. In summer, the moist vapour from the warm sea is driven north by the monsoon to the Himalayas, and falls as rain or is cooled on the heights into snow. The southern slopes of these mountains receive the heaviest rainfall in the world, and the rivers are swollen by melting snow and ice. The Indus and Bramaputra receive their waters from the northern slopes in the trough beyond the wall, and the Ganges is fed by the waters of the southern slopes. The Indus and the Bramaputra rise near each

other, but their mouths, 1500 miles apart, are on opposite sides of India. The Ganges and Jumna join with the Bramaputra as they approach the sea, which they enter by an intricate network of channels.

The Great Plains watered by these rivers extend from the Bay of Bengal to the Indian Ocean, and support, in Bengal, Assam, Oudh, the North-west Provinces, the Punjab, Sind, Rajputana, and lesser States, an immense population. For thousands of years these rivers have not only fertilized the land, but created it. The plains of northern India are formed from the silt brought down from the mountains.

The table-land covering the southern part of India was anciently called Deccan, or "the South." Its surface is broken by confused ranges, rising at the western end to Mount Abu, 5600 feet, and on the eastern to Mt. Parasnath, 4400 feet. The east and west sides are called the Ghats (a word applied to steps up a river bank); they meet at the point of the triangle. The Dodabetta Peak rises to 8700 feet. The rivers of the table-land Narbada and Tapti flow west, while the Godaveri, Krishna, and Kaveri, traversing the whole breadth of the table-land, discharge into the Bay of Bengal. The Ghats abound in large forest trees, and the black soil of Southern India, famous for its fertility, produces many kinds of grain, also tobacco, cotton, sugar cane, and pulses. The lowlands between the Ghats and the sea are rich in palms and rice. The table-land is also rich in minerals, including coal, iron ore, copper; gold is also found.



# THE BRITISH IN INDIA

## CHAPTER I

### *The Route to the East*

. . . where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold.

—MILTON, *Paradise Lost*.

It is, perhaps, disappointing to think that the early, heroic efforts of European nations to reach the East by sea, which resulted in such great changes in the history of mankind, were undertaken, not for conquest or love of adventure or the craving for "barbaric pearl and gold," but simply to obtain food. In the fourteenth century and in Northern Europe, animals could be killed for meat only in summer; provision for the rest of the year had to be made by preserving, and this was done chiefly by the use of mixed spices. These came from the Eastern seas by way of Egypt and Venice or Genoa, or perhaps by a longer land route through Persia. Egypt had long been ruled by independent monarchs at Cairo. Goods which passed through Persia or Egypt were obliged to pay heavy transit dues; in Egypt, indeed, traders were obliged to sell certain commodities to the Sultan at a price fixed by him. The trade routes between the East and Europe lay in Moslem hands.

In 1385, after a struggle which had lasted more than two centuries, the Portuguese had won back Portugal from the Moors, and were in no mood to pay tribute to the Moslem if it could be avoided. They began their great effort to find a sea-route to the East; an effort that

was greatly stimulated seventy years later by the fall of Constantinople. Prince "Henry the Navigator," grandson of the English "John of Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," dreamed of a new Crusade against the "Infidels" so that the trade of the East might be freed from Moslem control. He it was who directed the Portuguese mariners who laboriously felt their way along the African coast. His spirit may well have inspired the bold navigators who pursued the quest, until the Cape was rounded by Bartolomeo Diaz, and on the 20th May, 1498, three ships, of burden from 60 to 150 tons, under Vasco da Gama, reached the Malabar Coast and anchored off Calicut. So began the Portuguese power in India. A century later, it had reached its climax and began to decline.

The English had no prejudice against doing business with people whose religion differed from theirs. In the year 1579, the twenty-first year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a group of London merchants, called the Turkey Company, obtained a permission from the Sultan Murad II to trade with the Levant. In 1583 the Turkey Company sent a ship, the *Tyger*, to open commerce, if possible, farther East, with India. She had on board five merchants, Eldred, Newbery, Fitch, Leeds, and Story, and they carried letters from their Queen to the Emperor Akbar, described thereon as "King of Cambay." They were determined to reach India by the overland route.

The *Tyger* took them to a spot as near as she could go to Aleppo, in Syria, from which the adventurers were to pursue the long journey as best they might. At Ormuz, Newbery, Fitch (or Fytche), Leeds, and Story were arrested by the Portuguese, and taken on thence to Goa as prisoners. Leeds, it appears, was a painter; he offered to work at decorating the churches which the Portuguese were building, and became a monk. The others, helped by a Dutch merchant, escaped. Story, a jeweller, entered the service of the Mogul Emperor. Newbery made for home across Persia; his fate is unknown. Fitch wandered

through Southern India and Burma, and finally reappeared in London in 1591. It is not clear whether the letters to the Emperor were ever presented.

Two other important things happened in 1579. Thomas Stevens, an English Jesuit priest and missionary, sailed eastward in a Portuguese ship, and was probably the first Englishman to set foot on the mainland of India. He wrote home from Goa, and his letters about India perhaps helped to interest English people in the country. He helped and befriended Fitch and his companions at Goa. The other, more important, event was that Francis Drake, sailing round the world, reached the Spice Islands, the Malay Archipelago, and was believed to have made a treaty with the King of Ternate. Such rights of discovery as he had, the English East India Company, a generation later, tried vainly to uphold against the Dutch. Drake also learned, from papers on a captured Spanish vessel, of the wealth which lay in commerce with the Indies.

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## CHAPTER 2

### *The Beginning of the English Company*

It was in 1599, when the Dutch merchants who controlled the market raised the price of pepper to an exorbitant figure, that the traders of London were aroused to the need for action. The time was nearing the last days of the great Elizabeth. The defeat of the Invincible Armada of Spain and Portugal had encouraged English shipping. London merchants, to the number of eighty (including, by the way, the old adventurers Eldred and Ralph Fitch), met, and resolved to "make a stock" of £72,000 "to be employed in Ships and Merchandises, for the discovery of a Trade to the East India to bring into the Realm Spices and other Commodities," and the first step was taken on the long road which, though they knew it not, was to lead to an Indian Empire under the British Sovereign and Parliament. On 31st December, 1600, the Queen signed the Charter, which gave the Company fifteen years' monopoly of English trade from the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan. Nine years later, James I made the period indefinite, but it could be cancelled at three years' notice.

After two voyages, in 1601-3 and 1604-6, to Sumatra, Bantam in Java, and the Moluccas, the ships of the third expedition anchored off the Tapti river, below Surat in August, 1608. Hawkins, a Turkish-speaking merchant, went up to Agra and was received by the Emperor Jahangir. But the Portuguese persuaded him not to allow the English to trade in Gujarat. But Sir Henry Middleton in 1611, loaded a cargo at Cambay in the teeth of Portuguese opposition, and this probably impressed the Emperor, who was powerless at sea. In 1613 a permanent "factory" (i.e. a trading station) was established at Surat. In 1615 the first East Indiaman returned

to England with a cargo of indigo and cottons, and English trade with India had really begun. The Company established their own dockyard at Deptford, and their first vessel, *The Trade's Increase*, was described as "the goodliest and greatest ship ever framed in the kingdom." In 1615, also, Sir Thomas Roe, with credentials from King James, was the first English ambassador to the Mogul Emperor. His allowances did not allow him to give rich presents. He lived at that splendid court simply and frugally, yet like a gentleman, and the courtiers learned that Englishmen were not all either rough seamen or obsequious merchants.

In 1623, though supposed to be in alliance with the English, the Dutch violently opposed English trade with the Moluccas. They arrested ten Englishmen and nine Japanese for an alleged plot to seize the fort of Amboyna and assassinate the Governor. As there were only twenty English in the island, unarmed civilians, while the Dutch had between 400 and 500 men, of whom half were troops in garrison, and eight large Dutch vessels lay in the roadstead, the plot story was improbable. But the prisoners, who were tortured, were said to have confessed, and they were executed with great cruelty. This outrage caused great anger in England. In the end the Dutch had to pay £3615 as compensation to the heirs of servants of the Company who had been killed. But the English had to withdraw from a struggle for which they were not ready, and the Dutch monopolized the trade of the Archipelago until the great naval wars which began in 1793.

The policy of King James was peace at any price, and he was planning a Spanish marriage for his son. Sir Thomas Roe was ordered not to offend the Portuguese, and Roe sent the Viceroy at Goa a letter which he may have intended to be friendly, but which was signed, "Your friend or enemy, at your own choice." This was not answered, and Roe advised the Company to open up trade in the Persian Gulf. Their efforts to do this soon led to fighting.

The faces of the English in the East were now turned away from the Islands and towards the Indian mainland. They had there now six trading stations, Agra, Ahmadabad, Berhampur, Broach, Masulipatam, and Surat.

The Emperor Jahangir's son, Shah Jehan, succeeded him in 1628. He was less friendly to Europeans than his father, and especially hostile to the Portuguese. In 1631 he besieged and took their settlement at Hugli, and put to death many prisoners who refused to change their religion. The government of the Empire was becoming weak, the Company's caravans and agents were often attacked by robbers, and the company could obtain no redress.

In 1630-2 a famine devastated Gujerat and the Deccan, and was followed by a widespread plague.

King Charles I was not friendly to the Company. He issued commissions to commanders of privateering ships, and these sometimes attacked ships which carried the Company's "passes," in some ways equivalent to a primitive form of insurance. The King also gave a Charter to another Company, Sir William Courteen's Association, which caused inconvenience and loss of prestige to the Company, and aroused fresh anger among the Portuguese. Mutual dislike of the Dutch had tended to bring English and Portuguese together, and the English Company was managed by William Methwold, who was received with courtesy by the Portuguese at Goa. He reconciled them with the Courteen Company, which in 1650 united with the London Company.

Aurangzeb, a younger son of Shah Jehan, became Viceroy of the Deccan in 1636. He disliked foreigners, and especially Christians. He began a steady pressure southward of the Central Indian kingdoms, and *farmans* or orders from their rulers soon became worthless. Bengal had suffered less from the late famine than the western territories, and the Company sought to establish factories there and in Orissa. Owing to the lawless state of the

country, communication across India could only be by sea, and the Company's vessels were liable to attack from Arab and Maratha pirates. Many were lost.

The Portuguese now sent cargoes to Europe in English ships, and Methwold sent a mission to the Portuguese settlement at Macao in China, which returned with gold, pearls, silk, aloes, camphor, ginger, sugar, and other merchandise. A Chinese document has been preserved which notes that in 1636 "four vessels of barbarians with red hair" had arrived from abroad.

In 1641 the Company began following the Dutch and Portuguese example and fortified their early settlement at Masulipatam. A site called Madraspatam was purchased from the Raja of Chandragiri, and here Fort St. George was built, and Madras, the first territorial possession of the Company, was founded. At Hugli, in Lower Bengal, and at Balassore, Orissa, factories were established. In 1645 a local Mogul governor obtained for Mr. Gabriel Broughton, surgeon of the *Hopewell*, as a reward for professional services, exclusive rights of trading for the Company in Bengal.

The Civil War in England was bad for the Company. The best of their ships, the *John*, was delivered by her Commander to the King's navy, to prey upon Commonwealth commerce until wrecked. The war meant that few people wanted luxury goods, and made the home trade uncertain. The servants of the Company engaged dishonestly in private trade. The Company was a victim of both Royalists and Parliamentarians. The King bought quantities of pepper which was never paid for, and guns intended for the Company's ships were taken for the Parliament's artillery. Such things, when learned of by the Dutch, were eagerly made known in India, and the Company's good name suffered. The Dutchmen assumed defiant airs, and even the Spaniards and Portuguese became disrespectful. In Persia, it was said that the Shah, after hearing a traveller describe King Charles's

execution, as an eye-witness of the event, cried out upon the traveller as a traitor to have watched the murder of his sovereign, and clapped him in jail.

The Dutch had kept on advancing, and had reduced the Portuguese, in settlement after settlement, to distress and impotence. Wherever they went, they strove to destroy all trade but their own. They aimed at sweeping English commerce from the Eastern seas. The Commonwealth fleets might win victories in European waters far away, but Indians saw with their own eyes that the Dutch vessels, well built and armed, kept the seas, and the Dutch had more and better goods than the English for sale or barter.

In 1657, when the prospects seemed so discouraging that the Company had almost decided to withdraw from the trade, the Protector intervened and granted a new Charter to the original Company amalgamated with the Courteen one. By this they were authorized "to fortify and plant" in any of their settlements, and to transport "colonists" thither, and ninety-one new factors and merchants were sent out. Yet another Charter was granted in 1661 by Charles II very soon after his Restoration, and by this the Company got special privileges. Each member had a vote for every £500 subscribed to the Company's stock. The Company was given "power and command" over their fortresses and to appoint governors and councillors; they were to send ships of war and men for defence, to seize interlopers or unlicensed men and send them to England. Justice was to be administered according to the laws of England. In that year, the Island of Bombay was ceded to the British Crown as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, Princess of Portugal, on her marriage to Charles. The property was not actually handed over until 1665, when sharp orders from Lisbon overcame the reluctance of the Viceroy. This gentleman wrote sadly to his king that he foresaw that India would be lost on the day when the

English nation was settled in Bombay. It was soon evident that the cost of maintaining and developing the new possession was too heavy for the King's purse, and on 27th March, 1668, it was transferred to the Company, at a quitrent of £10 per annum. The Company continued paying this rent until 1730; after that, the Treasury apparently ceased to demand it. The Island was very unhealthy, but it had the advantage of being, as an island, inaccessible to the Maratha horsemen on their raids. Not very long before, the city of Surat, though not the English factory there, had been pillaged by the Maratha chieftain Sivaji. The Surat President was now appointed Governor of Bombay Island, and later, in 1687, the Presidency was removed thither.

In 1669 (when Wren was rebuilding the churches of London after the Great Fire) Gerald Aungier became president at Surat and Governor of Bombay, and saw the possibilities of Bombay with its fine natural harbour. His main object was to put the new settlement on a satisfactory basis. Courts of law were established; the local revenue was settled fairly; a suitable currency was introduced, and merchants and craftsmen were induced to settle on the Island. When Aungier died, in 1677, Bombay was well on the road to prosperity. Its population had risen to 60,000, three times the number of its inhabitants under Portuguese rule.

## CHAPTER 3

### *Consolidation*

A FEW months before his death, Aungier wrote to the Directors in London that "the trade could only be carried on, sword in hand." It had, in fact, been carried on until now without engaging in war on land. The Company's fighting had been at sea, against the Portuguese and the Dutch, and their military efforts had been confined to fortifying some of their settlements. They employed some European guards, quite undisciplined, and armed Indian watchmen. When the factories were fortified, seamen-gunners to man the batteries were furnished from the ships. But after the transfer of Bombay by the king, service under the Company was offered to the garrison of King's troops, and was generally accepted. This nucleus of the future Bombay Army consisted of two artillerymen with twenty-one guns, five officers, 139 other ranks, and fifty-four soldiers of mixed descent from Goa, called "Topasses." In 1683, 200 Rajputs, under their own officers and armed with their own weapons, were enlisted at Bombay. These were the land forces at the disposal of the Governor.

In the Directorate at home, Sir Josia Child had been for some years influential. He wished to create on the Indian coast, a power which could defend itself from any aggressor. Bombay and Madras were to be strongly fortified, and adequate naval and military forces raised. This policy was strongly supported by Sir Josia's namesake, John Child (who was, however, not his relation), who became President and Governor at Bombay in 1682. They strongly objected to the Mogul government levying dues on the Company's trade. President Child (he soon after became Sir John) was appointed Captain-General, Admiral, Commander-in-Chief, and Director of Mercantile

Affairs, in 1687. These imposing titles were bestowed so that their holder might vie in dignity with the contemporary Dutch officials at Batavia. He soon fell out with Aurangzeb, who had succeeded Shah Jehan as Emperor in 1658, after deposing and imprisoning his father. Child seized some Mogul vessels, which brought about a declaration of war. The English factors at Surat were imprisoned; Sir John captured valuable Mogul merchant ships; Bombay was besieged by the Mogul forces. The war ended in 1690, the Company having to pay a heavy fine. Child died during the negotiations.

Madras was from the first the most independent of the Company's settlements. In 1687 it received from King James II a Charter which raised it to a Municipality, with a Mayor's Court. It was situated in a region governed by petty rajas and an incompetent Nawab. A French East India Company had been organized in 1667 by Colbert, the great Finance Minister of Louis XIV. It sent out a squadron, which in 1672 occupied the harbour of Trincomalee and San Thome, near Madras. But France was fighting the Dutch in Europe, and the Dutch soon turned the French out of these ports. In 1676 François Martin, founder of French power in India, bought from a deputy of the Sultan of Bijapur a site near the seashore, opened a trade in piece-goods with the interior, and built Pondichery. The Dutch captured it and fortified it strongly, but in four years they had to restore it to the French under the Treaty of Ryswick. About 1673 some Frenchmen settled at Chandernagore on the Hugli, which was formally granted to them by Aurangzeb in 1688. In 1701 Martin became Director-General of all French settlements in India; when he died in 1706, Pondichery factory was the centre of a flourishing town. But the progress of French enterprise was checked by the War of the Spanish Succession, which checked French maritime development. At the same time the Dutch were weakened by land-fighting in Europe, and gradually turned their eyes away



from India towards Ceylon, Java, and the Archipelago. The English Company's commerce profited by this.

Madras had been strongly fortified since 1657, and now possessed a Supreme Court and a Judge-Advocate. Under the governorship of Elihu Yale (1687-92) it was especially active against piracy. In 1689 Captain Heath, a naval officer, was fined 200 pagodas for refusing to hang at his yardarm a man convicted of piracy by the local court.

The arrangement by which an agent at Hugli controlled the factories of Patna, Kasimbazar, and Balasore was abolished in 1661, and those factories were replaced under Madras. But in 1668 a factory was formed at Dacca, and this was followed by the opening of factories at Rajmahal and Malda, and the trade in saltpetre, silk goods, sugar, and cotton yarn grew steadily. In 1681 it was decided that these settlements should be independent of Madras, under an agent and governor. This experiment was not successful, and in 1684 these factories were placed once more under Fort St. George, whose agent was given rank as President and Governor for the Coast and Bay.

In 1656 the Company had obtained from a provincial governor a grant exempting them from the payment of imposts to the local officials. But the latter saw no good reason why the increasing trade of the English should escape the tolls levied upon all other merchants, and denied that the grant of the governor was binding upon his successors in office. The factors tried to obtain confirmation of their privilege, and Sherista Khan, governor in 1678, granted a fresh *nishan*, and a *farman* from the Emperor seemed to confirm it. Its wording, however, was not clear, and the local officials claimed that it authorized them to demand from the English the same dues as were paid at Surat. Finally, the factors decided that their only remedy was force, and that they must establish a fortified post near the Ganges mouth, to be the centre of their trade, and a place to which they could

withdraw when threatened. From such a stronghold they could put pressure upon the Viceroy by a blockade of seaborne commerce.

The Company in London agreed; in 1686 they ordered that the Bengal factories should be removed, and Chittagong seized upon as a base. They even planned a simultaneous blockade of the Western coast, and sent out several ships and a small military force.

The Company's chief agent in Bengal was Job Charnock, a man of experience and energy, who had, some years before, reported that "the whole kingdom is lying in a very miserable feeble condition, the great ones plundering and robbing the inferior." The initiative was taken by the Mogul governor of Hugli, who attacked the English factory. Charnock's men repulsed the attack, but he thought it best to abandon the factory and move down stream to Sutanati. From thence he opened negotiations with the Viceroy. These failing, he retreated farther, to the island of Hijili, near the mouth of the river, and established temporary headquarters, while the Company's ships, in reprisal, sacked and burned Balasore. Eventually, Charnock received reinforcements, and returned to Sutanati.

In September, 1688, fresh naval reinforcements arrived, and Captain Heath, their commander, bore orders from home to proceed with the projected expedition to Chittagong. Charnock vainly opposed this; the new settlement was abandoned, and the force reached Chittagong in January, 1689. Heath, finding this place too strongly fortified to be attacked with any prospect of success by his small force, retreated to Madras. Peace was made, because the Mogul viceroy was alarmed at the loss of trade caused by the campaign, and earnestly wished for the return of Charnock to Bengal. Charnock refused to return without a guarantee for the removal of the customs grievance, and in 1691 an imperial order was obtained for the abolition of the obnoxious dues in return for the annual payment of Rs. 2000.

The English re-established themselves at Sutanati, and fortified the place. In 1696 the Company agreed to pay Rs. 1200 a year for three villages, Sutanati, Calcutta (or Kalikat), and Govindpur. In honour of King William III the factory fort was named Fort William, and became the Headquarters of a Presidency. Job Charnock's "towne" was destined to be the site of the capital city of Calcutta. He died in 1693.

In 1698 another joint-stock Company "trading to the East Indies" was chartered, with a capital of £2,000,000. There was, for a time, bitter rivalry, though the old Company contributed £315,000. An amalgamation was, however, successfully completed in 1708; from thence onward there was but one East India Company in England, ruled by a Court of Directors and a General Court of Proprietors. No Western nation could afford to support more than one such body.

At the opening of the eighteenth century there were the three English Presidency settlements, Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, with their dependent factories. On the West coast were still Portuguese settlements, of which Goa was the chief. There were Dutch settlements at Cochin on the south-west coast and a few less important. There were Danes at Tranquebar on the south-east and at Serampur near Calcutta, and French at Pondichery eighty-five miles below Madras, at Chandarnagar in Bengal, and at Surat, Calicut, Balasore, Dacca, Patna, and Kasimbazar.

From the time of the union of the two rival Companies in 1709 until about the middle of the century, the East India Company was quietly prosperous. For the five years 1708-9 to 1712-13, the average number of ships sent to the East was eleven annually; for the similar period between 1743-4 and 1747-8 the annual average was twenty, of much larger tonnage. And the dividend paid by the Company rose from 5 per cent in 1708-9 to 10 per cent in 1711-12, continuing at that rate until

1722, when it dropped to 8 per cent, and in 1732 to 7 per cent. From 1743 till 1755 it was again 8 per cent.

It is by figures of this sort that a commercial concern such as the Company then was, must chiefly be judged. They are, of course, given here because the history of the Company, then and for long after, was the history of British India.

In the hot weather of 1714 a joint embassy from the Presidencies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay arrived at Delhi to pay their respects to the Mogul Emperor and, if possible, to obtain from him a grant for trading. The enterprise was delayed by the death of the Emperor Shah Alam I, and the subsequent struggle for the succession. The Emperor Farrukhsiyar, who had finally obtained the throne, appeared well disposed.

The Ambassador, John Surman, after long negotiations, returned in 1717, bringing three *farmans*, addressed to the Mogul officials of the three provinces—Hyderabad, Gujarat, and Bengal—in which the English were settled. The right to trade in Bengal free of all dues, subject to payment of Rs. 3000 per annum, was confirmed, and permission was given to rent land round Calcutta and to settle where else they might choose. Freedom from dues in Hyderabad Province was continued, the only payment required being rent for Madras; certain disputed villages were added to Madras. Payment of Rs. 10,000 per annum was accepted in satisfaction of all dues and customs at Surat. The Company's Bombay-coined rupees were to be current throughout the imperial dominions. Surman had not got all he had asked for, but he had secured a great deal.

It was soon found that it was easier to get a *farman* than to get it obeyed by the Mogul officials, in the disorganized state of the country.

The domestic history of Calcutta for this half-century includes the building and consecration of a church (St. Anne's, 1709) and of a house for the governor in the fort.

A judicial system was started under a charter of George I, in 1726, which also provided for the appointment of a mayor, sheriff, and aldermen. By the middle of the century the population of Calcutta was estimated at 100,000.

Madras also grew and prospered. The Company's only other stations on the Coromandel Coast were Fort St. David at Cuddalore and factories at Vizagapatam and Masulipatam.

The Madras Corporation was remodelled in 1727 by a Charter from the Crown. Quarter Sessions were established for the trial of criminal cases by the governor and five senior councillors, who were to be Justices of the Peace.

The trade of Bombay steadily increased, in spite of disputes with the Portuguese and Marathas, and a war with the Malabar pirates infesting the coast between Bombay and Goa. Boone, President and Governor from 1715 to 1722, built a wall round Bombay, and ships for protection. The power of these pirates was not finally broken until 1755, when the Peshwa willingly helped to destroy them. In 1720 a bank was established in Bombay and a Mayor's Court was created in 1728, under the charter also granted to Madras.

## CHAPTER 4

### *The English and the French*

FOR nearly a century and a half the English East India Company had been in India, with its handfuls of servants carrying on trade in a few isolated and widely separated settlements, under grants and permits made by Indian governments and rulers. The scattered crumbs of territory which they occupied were like tiny dots on the surface of the great peninsula. Despite the ambitions of Sir Josia Child and the rash and disastrous adventure planned by his namesake, the Company does not seem to have wanted any more power than was needed to keep its trade going. Its small force of soldiers enabled it to keep order and to defend itself from attack.

The transformation from a struggling commercial concern into a territorial Empire, which was gradually brought about, began in the contest for supremacy between the English and the French. At this time the Mogul Empire, weakened by wars, was no longer capable of ruling its turbulent states. In 1739, also, it suffered disaster by foreign invasion, when Nadir Shah, sovereign of Persia, poured a great army into India, plundered Delhi, the sack of the city lasting for two months, and retired through the mountain passes with treasure estimated at 32 millions sterling.

The Punjab had been peaceful and prosperous, but, when the Persian invaders left it, orderly rule had changed to utter desolation, banditry, and anarchy. To the east of Delhi, Afghans, who had colonized Rohilkand, raised a strong revolt. In the provinces of the south, the Marathas were established in security and, with the central government powerless, their raiding bands penetrated to Orissa, south-eastern Bihar, and Bengal.

After the death of the Emperor Farrukh-Siyar in 1719

three Emperors were placed on the throne within a few months, two of whom were already dying of consumption, while the third had been for years a State prisoner. Finally, at the end of September, 1719, Muhammad Shah, a fourth descendant of Aurangzeb, was enthroned. He lived to see the break-up of the Empire and the Persian invasion. He and his ministers were quite incapable. The Nizam was the only able and honest statesman left to advise the Emperor, and he was an aged man, and his sons were in rebellion in anticipation of his death. There was no hope left for the Mogul Empire.

The Carnatic was the most important principality under the Nizam, who was after 1724 really an independent sovereign in the Deccan. In 1736-7 the Nawab, the Nizam's deputy, usually referred to as the Nawab of Arcot, was Dost Ali. His son Safdar Ali, and son-in-law Chanda Sahib, conquered Trichinopoly, then ruled by a Hindu princess, and Chanda Sahib, a bold and astute leader, became its first Moslem governor. He admired the French, whose language he spoke.

Probably in revenge for the Moslem invasion of Tanjore territory, an army of Maratha horse descended upon the country and defeated the Carnatic army. The Nawab of Arcot was killed. Safar Ali bought off the Marathas with money and made a secret compact by which they agreed to crush Chanda Sahib, whom his brother-in-law thought too powerful. The Marathas took Trichinopoly in 1741, and Chanda Sahib was sent, a prisoner, to Satara.

The Maratha commander demanded of Dumas, the French governor of Pondichery, the surrender of Chanda Sahib's wife and family, with elephants, jewels, and other property, placed in Pondichery for safety, backing the demand with threats. Dumas replied "The wife of Chanda Sahib is here under the protection of the King of France, my master; every Frenchman in India would die rather than deliver her to you." The Marathas

decided that Pondichery was too strong to assault, and the brave and chivalrous answer of Dumas did much to increase French prestige among the Indian princes. This prestige was inherited by his successor, Joseph Dupleix, who became governor of Pondichery in 1742. Dupleix had been promoted from chief of the French factory at Chandernagar on the Hugli, which he had raised from an insignificant village to a flourishing colony. He had made himself a master of Oriental diplomacy, and was now Director-General in India of the *French East India Company*.

By this time it had become generally realized that wars, wherever they were fought, influenced events in far distant regions. The war in Europe, called the War of the Austrian Succession, had, indirectly, a great influence upon the history of India.

In 1744, France joined Spain against Britain. During a previous war in which the French and English had taken opposite sides, the English in Madras and the French at Pondichery had arranged to remain neutral. Even now Dupleix made a proposal for a similar arrangement. The English Presidencies said they had no hostile designs (which indeed they could not have carried out) but warned Dupleix that they could not control the actions of the British Navy. Dupleix took this as accepting his proposal. When news came that a British squadron under Commodore Curtis Barnett had captured the French Company's China Fleet and certain richly laden "country" ships in which Dupleix was interested, the Frenchman felt, unreasonably, that he had been tricked.

Dupleix could not fit and equip ships without a harbour, which was lacking on the Coromandel Coast. So, since he could not have neutrality, he called up Mahé de la Bourdonnais, a veteran sailor who was Governor of the Ile de France (Mauritius), which had been French since the Dutch abandoned it in 1715. La Bourdonnais, with a



more or less improvised fleet of eight sail, after delays and mishaps reached the Coast.

Barnett was dead, and succeeded by his senior captain, Edward Peyton, who was not an enterprising officer, and all four English ships were weakened by long cruising and their crews depleted. An indecisive action was fought on 25th June, 1746, and Peyton then sailed for Ceylon. He returned in August, and again sighted La Bourdonnais's squadron, but then left the Coast and sailed for the Hugli, remaining there until the arrival of reinforcements. He thus abandoned Madras to the French.

The Madras garrison was weak, untrained, and had poor officers. It surrendered to La Bourdonnais in September after a six days' siege, with a loss of only six men. While La Bourdonnais and Dupleix disputed about sharing the ransom of the place and who should retain it, a hurricane crippled their squadron, and La Bourdonnais left behind a number of men. He returned to France, and was imprisoned on charges brought against him by Dupleix.

The Nawab's interference had been sought by each side in turn. After La Bourdonnais had entered the fort, the Nawab sent troops to compel him to withdraw, but the French made a sally and drove them away. The Nawab's men also tried to bar the way of a French detachment marching to reinforce, and again the Indians were brushed aside. Their cavalry could make no impression on disciplined troops who reserved their fire.

At this early stage in the war, the honours, on the whole, were with the French, but their capture of Madras marked their high-water mark. Dupleix had no such luck when he invested Fort St. David's for eighteen months, though it was no better adapted for defence than Madras. The command of the sea had returned to the English under Admiral Griffin. Whenever Dupleix approached the fort, the English topmasts were sighted on the horizon, and the French would retreat hurriedly lest Griffin should attack Pondichery in their absence.

In 1748 Rear-Admiral Boscawen arrived, with a strong squadron of six ships of the line besides smaller vessels. He bore the King's Commission as General and Commander-in-Chief, with orders to avenge the capture of Madras. The land forces he brought with him consisted of drafts from several regiments and some Scottish Jacobite prisoners, who were pardoned on condition that they enlisted. The French raised the siege of Fort St. David, and Boscawen's raw troops besieged Pondichery. Dupleix defended his capital gallantly. The siege was raised in the same year, before the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) restored Madras to the English in exchange for Louisburg in North America.

So ended the first round of the struggle between the English and the French in India. It resulted in increased prestige for the French, but also in a considerable decrease in their trade owing to their comparative weakness at sea, whereas exports from India to England had increased. It demonstrated that in any future war the country unable to secure its sea communications would lose trade as well as hope of reinforcements from Europe.

In the course of the siege of Fort St. David one of the prisoners taken by the French was Major Stringer Lawrence, a veteran who had done good work in reorganizing the garrison and drilling and training the sepoys. It was he, too, who taught Robert Clive the rudiments of the art of war when that young Company's writer, who had come out to Fort St. George in 1744, had obtained his commission as Temporary Ensign. Clive, to avoid having to give his parole to the French, had escaped from Madras after the surrender, disguised as an Indian interpreter.

Madras was not again made the seat of the Company's government until 1752; in the meantime the Company's affairs were directed from Fort St. David, under a governor named Floyer. A revival of trade after the necessary for both the English and French C

but even before the transfer of headquarters, Floyer and Dupleix had plunged on opposite sides into Indian politics. Hopes of peace and goodwill disappeared in the rush to strengthen positions before war should again break out.

An obvious method of extending influence was to lend troops to rival princes. The prestige of troops trained on European lines made ambitious nobles willing and eager to bid for their services, regardless of consequences. On the side of the Companies there was the prospect of a handsome profit, and the hope of trade concessions and even territory. Both the English and French yielded to the temptation. Shahji, dispossessed ruler of Tanjore, offered *Devi-kottai* in exchange for the loan of troops to reinstate him. *Devi-kottai* was taken by Major Lawrence with Clive as second in command. Shahji's claims were compounded for by a pension from Tanjore State, and the King of Tanjore ceded *Devi-kottai* to the Company.

In the same year (1749) Dupleix sent his Company's troops against Anwar-ud-Din Khan, who had been appointed Nawab by the Nizam, and who had assisted the English in the siege of Pondichery. Anwar-ud-Din's army was defeated, and himself killed, in action, and Dupleix received a grant from Mozaffer Jung and Chanda Sahib, of the territories of Villiyanallur and Bahur, with the addition, on the Orissa coast, of the province of Masulipatam and the island of Divy.

But Dupleix was aiming at bigger game still. A way had been opened for his ambition by the death of the Nizam-ul-Mulk in the very year of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The succession to the Nizam's throne was strongly disputed. Dupleix managed to place his nominees on the thrones of both Hyderabad and Arcot, and for a time this gave him control of the whole south of India. In the boldness and cleverness of his schemes, as in his skill in carrying them out, he has perhaps had no equal in India.

But Dupleix was not satisfied with this. He had no more than a nominal sovereignty, and he was not in a position to enforce it.

Dupleix, however, was not a man to be deterred by such considerations. He was a man of great energy and of great ambition. He was determined to make the English the



LOUIS DUPLEIX

171

English supported the claim of his uncle Muhammad Ali Dupleix, feeling secure and supposing that the English would accept the situation, sent his most able commander, de Bussy, to the Deccan with 500 Europeans and 4000 Indian troops to support Muzaffar Jang. During this march, Muzaffar was killed by three malecontent Pathan nawabs. De Bussy, with great promptitude, avoided a

break in the succession by proclaiming Salabat Jang, and marched on to Aurangabad.

Though in this raid de Bussy had exceeded the orders of Dupleix, the latter was delighted at its success and wished to marry de Bussy to his daughter-in-law. He even dreamed of placing Salabat Jang at the head of the subah of Bengal, thus dominating the greater part of India. In the meantime Salabat Jang was, with the consent of the nobles and the army, formally proclaimed Viceroy of the Deccan, and confirmed all the privileges granted to the French by his predecessors. De Bussy, with forces increased to 9000 Europeans with further reinforcements of Indian troops, took up his quarters at Hyderabad. He was now the real master of the Deccan.

In January, 1751, Clive, who had gone back to civil employ, returned to military service with the rank of captain.

The city of Arcot, in the eighteenth century the capital of the Carnatic, is sixty-four miles south-west of Madras. It was not a place of great strength in 1751, because the defences had been neglected and allowed to become partly ruinous. The citadel, nearly a mile in circumference, had houses on all sides, which overlooked the ramparts. Several of the towers flanking the walls were in ruins, and portions of the walls had fallen into the ditch, in some places choking it. The palace, in which the Nawab held his court, was of great size, well built, and gorgeously decorated. The bazaars or market-places were ample, and well supplied with all sorts of merchandise; a cloth manufactory brought a substantial revenue to the Nawab's treasury.

The population numbered about 100,000. Chanda Sahib had been in possession of the place since the battle in which Anwar-ud-din was killed; his troops forming the garrison were about 1100 in number.

Clive suggested to the Governor of Madras, Mr. Saunders, that since the available English force was too weak

to fight Chanda Sahib and his French allies under the walls of Trichinopoly, and Chanda Sahib had weakened his Arcot garrison in his anxiety to capture Trichinopoly, Arcot should be seized by a *coup-de-main*. He argued that this would have the effect of forcing Chanda to choose between the loss of his capital and abandoning the siege of Trichinopoly. It was true that the force at the Governor's disposal seemed inadequate for this purpose. For even by reducing the garrison of Fort St. David to 100 men and that of Madras to fifty, no more could be mustered for the raiding party than 200 Europeans and 300 sepoys. Clive, however, undaunted by the odds and confiding in his own judgment and skill, undertook to command the force. After some hesitation, Saunders agreed to the plan.

So, on the 26th of August, 1751, the column started. Clive had under him only eight European officers, and of these only two had been under fire. His artillery consisted of three light field-guns. The march was toilsome, but on the 31st, struggling through a furious monsoon thunderstorm, they halted within a few miles of Arcot. Here Clive learned that spies from the city, having seen his command thus defying the elements, had made such report of their invincibility that Chanda's commandant had decided not to await their arrival. He had, in fact, abandoned the citadel, and Clive entered and occupied it without firing a shot.

He found in the place eight guns of sorts, and immediately had them mounted in the most effective positions. He had already, before entering, sent back to Madras a request for a couple of 18-pounders. He issued strict orders to his men that the inhabitants of the citadel (of whom there were three or four thousand) were not to be molested or their property injured. Discipline was maintained, and he soon established such a reputation that merchants from the city handed over stocks of goods to his custody. The population, then and afterwards

remained neutral, though many, on promise of reward, helped to repair the defences.

On the 4th September he learned from his spies that the late garrison of Arcot were encamped six miles away at the fort of Timeri, and marched to attack them. After a few exchanges from the guns, the enemy fled into the hills. Having no heavy guns, he could not destroy the fort, and returned to Arcot. A few days later he heard that about 3000 of the enemy were about three miles away. This time, he made a midnight sortie, surprised the camp, and routed the force without losing a man.

Soon after this, remaining in the citadel with thirty Europeans and fifty sepoy as a guard, he sent the whole of the rest of his command along the road to meet and escort the expected convoy of guns. The enemy, learning of this, appeared before Arcot and attempted an assault, but Clive's handful managed to drive them off, and on the following day the convoy came in with the guns and stores and the escort which had gone to meet them.

But, before long, Clive's successful occupation of the place produced the effect upon which he had reckoned. Chanda detached a strong body from the force besieging Trichinopoly, under his son, called the Raja Sahib, and 10,000 men, including the late fugitive garrison, "set down" before Arcot. This army had a nucleus of 150 white (presumably French) soldiers.

Now the siege began in earnest, and was vigorously pressed. From the houses commanding the places and ramparts a continuous fire of musketry was poured in, while several siege-guns battered the walls and brought down quantities of the masonry. The boats were numerous enough practically to encircle the city, and were able to prevent the passing-in of supplies to the defenders. Clive was tireless, and inspired his little army with courage and devotion, the English and natives rivalling each other.

The Raja Sahib sent in messages under a flag of truce

messages to Clive. Following the natural first impulse of his race (he was young, and had had no dealings with the English until now), in polite and of course roundabout language, he offered the English commander a bribe. The next emissary asked for a meeting, and negotiations, with hints of a greater bribe. Finally, came horrid threats of what would follow the capture of the citadel. Each messenger returned with a curt refusal, and the siege went on.

Clive (who was evidently well served by his Intelligence Department) was aware that the Maratha chief Morari Rao, who had been hired to assist Muhammad Ali, was hovering near the border with five or six thousand of his bandits, and Clive eventually succeeded in getting a letter through to him, asking for aid. Morari, who was probably only waiting upon events with a view to coming in on the winning side, yet admired the stubborn valour of Clive and his men, and replied that he would come.

And on the 9th November his advanced horsemen were actually seen a few miles from Arcot. When the Raja Sahib knew this, he knew that he must strike a crushing blow against Clive, or give up all hope of taking Arcot.

The 14th November fell upon a day of solemn fervour to all the Moslem world, for it was the anniversary of the death of Hassan and Hussein, saints and martyrs, and the Raja Sahib chose that day for the general assault, confident that his troops would fight in the fury of religious zeal, and force their way against the opposition of the Unbelievers.

Clive, well informed, as usual, by his spies, knew of the coming assault. Having made all possible preparations, he lay down to rest. The attack began at dawn. Four columns of the enemy troops advanced, at four separate points; two columns attacked breaches in the walls, and two rushed to force the gates; for this purpose they had plated with iron plates the foreheads of elephants, and drove the huge beasts before them. Of the other stormers,



some passed the ditch by means of fallen masonry, and others, where the water was deep, by using a raft.

The defenders kept up a hot fire of musketry, and the elephants, refusing to face it, turned screaming upon their drivers, trampled some of them under foot, and brought confusion and panic into the advancing columns. Those attackers who clambered upon the fallen rubbish were shot down from behind the parapet. As for those on the raft, Clive with his own hands aimed and fired a gun which swept it clear in a moment with a discharge of grape. Despite the frantic efforts of the leaders, the assault was repelled at all points, and the enemy drew off, leaving 400 dead and wounded in the ditch and on the ground between it and the walls.

Clive's devoted little force had been weakened by hard service during the siege; to meet this final assault he had but eighty Europeans and 120 sepoys; all his officers save one were disabled by wounds. The enemy continued their fire from the houses all day and far into the night, but the assault was not renewed. Probably, they feared an attack by the Marathas in their rear. Their fire ceased at one o'clock in the morning of the 15th, and it was soon reported that they had withdrawn. A patrol returned saying that not one of the enemy was to be seen in the city.

A welcome booty, in guns, treasure, and military stores fell into the hands of the conquerors. But Clive did not allow himself to be lulled by success into inactivity. With a small reinforcement from Madras, aided by some of Morari Rao's Marathas, he attacked and captured the fort of Timeri, and destroyed an enemy force moving from Trichinopoly to join the Raja Sahib.

The defence of Arcot, by Clive's tiny force against an enemy estimated at 10,000 men, was an astonishing feat of arms, and a severe blow to the prestige of the French in the south. It spread the fame of English valour throughout India, and, later, the world.

Dupleix persuaded his Indian allies to attack Madras, but Clive, on his way to Trichinopoly, was recalled by Saunders, and marched towards the Presidency town. Four hundred French, with 4500 Indians, broke up and removed themselves on his approach. He divided his force and attacked in front and rear. Near midnight, he received news that the enemy's rearguard had been routed and his guns captured. This action "changed the balance of French and English rule in India."

Shortly after, Clive returned on sick-leave to England. The war continued fitfully. On the whole, English influence was strongest in the Carnatic or Madras coast, and their protégé, Muhammad Ali, maintained his position at Arcot.

Inland, the French were supreme in Southern India, and they were also able to seize the maritime tract called the Northern Circars.

In August, 1754, a French Commissioner, M. Charles Robert Godeheu, landed at Pondichery. He brought news that the French and British governments had agreed to end the war between the Companies in India, and that Dupleix was recalled to France.

So ended the public career of this great Frenchman. With much skill and with unwavering courage, he had devoted his life and his fortune to his dream of a French Empire in India. He had been hampered by lack of support from France, by his own idealism, and by the dishonesty of his Indian agents. And if the French Company grudged him money, it was at least partly because he told them that his schemes would cost them nothing, and tried to make it true by spending great sums out of his own purse. He often failed to work in harmony with his colleagues; he suspended five commanders in three years, yet his countrymen in India felt his departure as a great misfortune. His only reward from his Government was to be made a marquis. He died in poverty in 1763.

The hereditary succession of the Nawabs of Bengal was broken in 1740 by Alif Vardi Khan, a usurper, but the last of the great Nawabs. His successor, in 1756, was his grandson, Siraj-ud-Daula (Surajah Dowlah) a youth of 18, whose ungovernable temper led him almost immediately to quarrel with the English. In pursuit of a member of his family who had escaped from his vengeance, he marched on Calcutta with a large army, after seizing the Company's factory at Kasimbazar, near Murshidabad, his capital.

The garrison of Calcutta at the time consisted of about 250 civilians, of whom about half were Europeans, 260 regular soldiers, and about 1500 Indian matchlockmen. Fort William had been badly neglected, and it was almost impossible to defend it from the land side. The officers of the garrison had had no more experience of war than the officers at Madras in 1746. Worst of all, there was no leader worthy of the name, as was immediately shown when the army of Siraj-ud-Daula appeared before the place on 16th June, 1756. Nothing had been done to repair the hopeless state of the landward defences, but, even so, the attackers were driven back on the north side.

Next day, they entered the town, on the 18th they drove the defenders from the outposts, and on the 19th the fort was deserted by its commanding officer, the governor, Mr. Drake, and most of the Presidency Council. With crowds of civilian refugees, women, and deserters of the garrison, during the night they boarded ships lying in the river. The rest prolonged the defence for one day more under John Zephaniah Holwell, a medical officer and junior member of Council. On 20th June, in the evening, the remainder of the garrison surrendered.

The tragedy that followed is well known from a famous description by Macaulay. The unhappy prisoners were thrust for the night into a cell about 18 feet square, having only two small barred windows. When the door was opened next morning, only twenty-three persons remained

alive out of 146 men and women. Those who know the climate of Calcutta in June may wonder that there were any survivors at all.

Holwell, who was one of those who lived through that dreadful night, and wrote an account of it, was convinced that Amir Chand (Omichand), a very rich merchant and banker, who had recently been shut out from the Company's business, had plotted against the English with the Bengal government, and been released from arrest by Siraj-ud-Daula, was responsible for the tragedy of the Black Hole.

Siraj-ud-Daula, when he received a report in the morning of what had happened, at once released the survivors, except Holwell and two other officers of the Company, who were sent to Murshidabad with orders that they should be well treated.

News of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras on 16th August, and it was decided to abandon a contemplated attack against the French in order to send troops to Bengal. A small trading vessel was sent as soon as possible, with 230 men under Major Kilpatrick, and was followed on 16th October by a force under Clive, now a Lieutenant-Colonel, and Admiral Watson. The field force consisted of three companies, 39th Foot (now the 1st Batt. Dorsetshire Regiment), about 600 men of the Company's Europeans, and 1500 Indian infantry. Watson was to act as escort in the 74-gun ship *Kent*.

After some dispute Clive was given complete control. He was instructed that if news of the outbreak of war should arrive while he was in Bengal, he should capture the French settlement of Chandernagar. Calcutta was re-occupied on 2nd January, 1757, after bombardment, and Admiral Watson replaced Drake as Governor.

Siraj-ud-Daula again moved on Calcutta with an army of 50,000 horse and foot, but after a successful night-attack by the garrison he came to terms. The Company's factories were restored, the villages obtained from

Farrukh-Siyar were actually handed over, sanction was given to fortify Calcutta, and the Company was granted free trade throughout Bengal, Orissa, and Bihar. On 10th March he sent a permit under his seal for an attack on Chandernagar. After bombardment from the river, the French factory surrendered on 23rd March.

Siraj-ud-Daula had let the English destroy his natural allies, the French, and when Jean Law, late chief of the Kasimbazar factory, left Murshidabad in April for Patna, the French power and influence disappeared from Bengal. At the same time, the young Nawab, by his own folly, aroused general hatred and was disliked by his own army as well as by the great Hindu bankers. Revolution was in the air. The nobles made up their minds to overthrow Siraj-ud-Daula and make Mir Jafar Nawab in his stead. The English Council at Calcutta decided to support Mir Jafar.

Accordingly Clive marched against Siraj-ud-Daula with 900 Europeans, 100 Topasses, 2100 veteran Indian infantry, eight 6-pounder guns, and two field-howitzers. On 23rd June, he met the army of the Nawab, 18,000 cavalry, 50,000 infantry, and fifty 32- and 24-pounders, at Plassey. The action began with an artillery duel, in which the Nawab's small French artillery detachment greatly distinguished itself. The English troops then advanced to where two mounds faced the Nawab's main position. All day, Mir Jafar and his troops had remained inactive on the English right flank. Suddenly the Nawab suspected treachery and fled on a camel to Murshidabad, and his army broke in disorder. In this action, which cleared the way for British supremacy in India, the casualties among the English, King's and Company's troops, were only twenty Europeans and fifty-two Indians killed and wounded.

Mir Jafar became Nawab, and when Siraj-ud-Daula fell, a prisoner, into his hands, he was immediately murdered. Mir Jafar was not made Nawab without conditions. He

had to pay compensation for the losses caused by Siraj-ud-Daula's seizure of Calcutta, and for the money spent by the Company on the war. In addition, he made large gifts of money to the chief officers of the Company. This was in accordance with Indian custom, and was not, at that time, thought wrong or contrary to the King's Regulations or the Company's rules. Clive received sums of money equal to about £243,000. The sums eventually paid by Mir Jafar, in compensation to the Company and European, Indian, and Armenian individuals amounted to £3,388,000, and in addition he had to allot a large share of his revenue annually for the support given him by the Company.

Later, he signed a further treaty giving to the Company rights over the territory called the twenty-four Parganas, about 882 square miles with an annual assessment equivalent to about £28,000. This was the first important territory obtained by the Company in Bengal. Authority in Bengal was divided between the English trading Company and an Indian ruler dependent on that Company's troops for the maintenance of his rule.

In 1758, Clive was appointed Governor of all the Company's Bengal settlements. In the north-west, the Shahzada, afterwards the Emperor Shah Alam, with an army of Afghans and Marathas, was claiming Bengal. He had the support of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. In the south, de Bussy and the Comte de Lally, the Commandant-General of French settlements in India, overshadowed the English at Madras. The Shahzada was besieging Patna. Mir Jafar wished to buy him off, but Clive, with 450 Europeans and 2500 sepoys, dispersed the Afghans and Marathas without striking a blow.

In the same year, Clive sent a force under Colonel Forde, which recaptured Masulipatam from the French, and permanently established the Company's influence in the Northern Circars, and at the Nizam's Court.

The Dutch were the only other European nation besides

the French who might yet prove rivals to the English. Clive defeated them by land and by water; thenceforth, their Chinsurah settlement existed only by the consent of the English.

The Comte de Lally-Tollendal, usually known in history as Lally, had landed at Pondichery in April, 1758, with a large French force. He had been given the twofold task of reforming the French administration and driving the English out of India. His first act was to attack Fort St. David. The defences of this place were not strong, and the Commandant, Major Polier, was distrusted by his men. The Fort capitulated after a siege of only sixteen days, which was a disagreeable surprise for the English. Lally then wanted to proceed at once against Madras, but he was not in command of the naval force, and D'Aché, who was, refused to sail against Pocock, who commanded the English ships. Without naval help, and while the English squadron was in the offing, the siege of Madras could not be begun.

The Raja of Tanjore owed the French Company 70 lakhs. Tanjore is 200 miles as the crow flies from Fort St. David; Lally proposed to recover this money by force and marched down the coast. He plundered the small port of Nagore, and sold the booty to his colonel of hussars. At Tiruvalur, a holy place to the Hindus, he executed six temple Brahmans as spies. The inhabitants of the country he traversed fled in panic, and he was unable to get fresh supplies. On 18th July, arrived before the city of Tanjore, he found himself too short of ammunition to begin the siege, and opened negotiations, hoping that with the raja's assistance he might be able to attack the English at Trichinopoly. Weary of fruitless discussions, he opened an attack on the place. On 8th August he heard that Pocock had beaten D'Aché off Karikal, and on the 11th he raised the siege and made for the coast.

In the naval action, the French lost 500 men, the English less than 200. D'Aché refused to remain any

longer on the coast, landed a body of seamen as reinforcements for Lally, and sailed from Pondichery on 3rd September.

When the rains were over, on 14th December, the French began the siege of Madras. The veteran Colonel Stringer Lawrence commanded the garrison. The governor, Pigot, had collected provisions and munitions, and repaired and improved the defences. Lally's preparations and transport were poor; the French could not open fire until 2nd January, 1759. They were also hampered by a detachment of the English Company's troops which had marched from Trichinopoly and established a post near St. Thomas's Mount. On 16th February, a squadron was sighted, and when it was learned that the ships were English Lally abandoned the siege.

This success of the Company's troops was a notable check to the French. Lally resolved to recall de Bussy from the Deccan, and to concentrate all the available French troops against the English. De Bussy, however, left all his northern troops behind when he came south, leaving them under a commander far less able than himself, but refusing to withdraw them. The immediate result was a quarrel between the French leaders, and eventually it led to the loss of French power at the Nizam's court. De Bussy had obtained from the Nizam, for the payment of his men, a personal grant of four districts in the north of Madras Presidency, between Hyderabad and the sea, and including the eastern ghats. De Bussy's troops were probably left to guard these. The French troops were still separated, and the Deccan detachment under a weak commander.

It was at this time that the column under Colonel Forde, dispatched by Clive as we have mentioned, performed such important service to the Company. Landing at Vizagapatam and making an alliance with Anada Razu, a powerful ruler, Forde marched south and completely defeated the French under Conflans at Kondur,



north of Rajahmundry. Renewing his march, he appeared before Masulipatam, and despite a mutiny in his own force and other troubles, carried the place by scaling the walls with ladders on the night of 8th April, taking more prisoners than the number of his own men.

The siege of Madras and the capture of Masulipatam marked the turning-point in the war. The end came in 1760, when Colonel (later Sir Eyre) Coote won a decisive victory over Lally at Wandiwash, afterwards starving Pondichery into surrender.

## CHAPTER 5

### *After Plassey*

CLIVE left India for England in February, 1760, and did not return until May, 1765. As his homeward-bound ship came out of the Hugli he received a dispatch from the Coromandel announcing the victory of Wandiwash a month before.

At this time began a period in the history of the English in India which no one can think of without regret. Clive when he went home in 1760, left in Bengal no real system of government, but only a tradition that wealth could be extracted from the Indians by terror. The government of Bengal was paralysed by differences between the Company, now really masters of the country, and its nominal ruler, the Nawab. The nominal rulership was transferred by a Council majority from one Nawab to another, with profit to the king-makers. The latter were merchants without direct responsibility, and served by subordinates, poorly paid yet possessed of great opportunities for gain.

Both "writers" and councillors were so poorly paid that it must have been clear to everyone that they could not live on their pay. In one and the same order the Directors sternly forbade the practice of private trading and the keeping of palankeens, horses, or chaises by writers. And, on the other hand, the lives of the servants of the Company were passed in a country where the giving of presents and bribes by inferiors to superiors was part and parcel of the social system.

Illicit trading and oppression of workers were rife, and these evils constantly tended to increase.

Henry Vansittart, the new Governor, came from Madras with an excellent record, but he was hampered by the Bengal officials whom he superseded, and did not know how to act in a difficult situation. The English

troops at Patna were on the verge of mutiny for want of pay, and desertion was rife: the Treasury had no money; shipment of goods had been suspended; the allowance due from the Nawab for the payment of troops was months in arrear.

It was found profitable to dethrone Mir Jafar, and to put Mir Kasim, his son-in-law, in his place, but the new Nawab showed a will of his own, and cherished dreams of independence. He organized an army after European models, and plotted with the Nawab Wazir of Oudh. He resolved to try his strength. There were affrays between his customs officers and traders who claimed to be acting for the Company's servants. The Council would not listen to the Nawab's complaints about this; the Governor and Mr. Hastings, then a junior councillor, tried to compromise, and this was a failure. An English boat was fired on, and a general rising took place. Two thousand of the Company's sepoy were cut to pieces at Patna, and about 200 Europeans, there and elsewhere in Bengal, were killed.

It became necessary to reconquer Bengal. Mir Kasim had no more successes. His trained regiments were beaten in two pitched battles, at Gheria and Udhunala, by Major Adams, and the Nawab himself took refuge with the Nawab Wazir of Oudh, who refused to give him up. Shah Alam, now on the throne of the Moguls, took side against the English, and Patna, which had been recovered, was again threatened. A sepoy mutiny broke out. It was sternly quelled by Major (later Sir Hector) Munro, who made use of the old Mogul punishment of blowing the ringleaders from guns. In 1764 Major Munro won the decisive battle of Buxar, laying Oudh at the feet of the conquerors; Shah Alam, the Mogul Emperor, came as a suppliant to the English camp. The deposed Nawab of Bengal, Mir Jafar, was again appointed Nawab, in place of Mir Kasim.

Clive (now Lord Clive, an Irish peer) came out again

in 1765, as Governor of Bengal. His policy now was to govern in fact but not in name under a grant from the Mogul Emperor, and to reform the Company's service by stopping dishonest gains and guaranteeing reasonable salaries. These plans were not carried out at once, but it may be said that efforts at good government date from this second Governorship of Clive.

Oudh was returned to the Nawab Wazir, on condition that he paid half a million sterling towards the cost of the war. The Provinces of Allahabad and Kora were restored to the Emperor Shah Alam, who granted to the Company the control of the revenue of Lower Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, and also control of the Northern Circars. Half of the £600,000 annuity due by the Company to the puppet Nawab was paid directly to the Emperor as tribute. The actual collection of taxes, etc., remained for seven years in the hands of Indian officials.

Despite the united resistance of civil servants, and a mutiny of 200 military officers, the reforms of the Company's service were eventually carried.

Lord Clive left India for the last time in 1767, when his health had completely broken down. A few years later, on the 22nd November, 1774, worn out by conflict and by a torturing disease, he died by his own hand. The fierce efforts and struggles of thirty years had left him little time for reflection, and his conduct had not been blameless. But he had accomplished marvels; and but for his dauntless courage, forceful character, and sound judgment, there might have been no British Empire in India. He coveted money as an instrument of ambition, but never acquired it in any manner that he did not openly avow, and his ambition was mainly for his country.

In 1770, there was a severe famine in Bengal, which is said to have swept away a third of the population. The Company, at that time, did not know what to do. The two-fold system of government established by Clive was a failure, chiefly because there was no one person who could

be blamed for a failure or a disaster. Even the Directors in England saw that a change was needed. And so Warren Hastings, a distinguished servant of the Company, was made Governor, with orders to carry out reforms.

To carry out this plan, Hastings removed the exchequer from Murshidabad to Calcutta, and appointed European



WARREN HASTINGS

*Ris 1812*

officers to supervise collections and preside in revenue courts. Hastings reorganized the Indian service, reformed the revenue collections, created courts of justice, and laid the foundations of a police system. From 1774 to 1785, he was the first Governor-General. He was hampered by a colleague on the Council, Sir Philip Francis, whom he ultimately wounded in a duel.

His policy towards the Indian rulers was to ally himself

with the independent Mohammedan states, principally Oudh, to prevent the Marathas from overrunning Bengal, but in the end he had to advance, and bring the Mohammedan states practically under his own control. He had to make Bengal "pay." He saved about £160,000 a year by halving the allowance to the Nawab, and stopped altogether the allowance of £300,000 to the Emperor, because he said that, since the Emperor was now but a puppet in the hands of the Marathas, payment to the Emperor meant payment to them, the Company's greatest enemies. He sold the Provinces of Allahabad and Kora to the Wazir of Oudh for half a million, thus freeing the Company from a military charge equal to that amount.

When he returned to England, in 1785, Hastings was impeached by Parliament for these and other alleged acts of oppression. His trial, before the House of Lords, lasted seven years, ending in a verdict of Not Guilty on all the charges. But Hastings was ruined by the cost of his defence.

Hastings perhaps was not entirely free from blame, but it must not be forgotten that he had done his utmost for the good of the Company and for England. He it was who, in spite of great difficulties, laid the foundation of the British Empire in India, after Clive had cleared the way.

On the Madras side, the Company's government there had aroused the enmity of the two strongest Mohammedan powers, the Nizam of Hyderabad and Haidar Ali, Nawab of Mysore. Hastings's cleverness prevented their alliance with the Marathas, and eventually kept the Nizam neutral. But in July, 1780, the Mysore army, well-trained and equipped, about 70,000 strong, with a French detachment of 400 from Mauritius, descended upon the Carnatic, defeated a detachment of the Company's troops under Colonel Baillie, who was on the march to join Munro, and advanced upon Madras.

Hastings sent Sir Eyre Coote by sea, with 600 Europeans and sent a strong body of Indian troops by land. Coote

began his campaign against Haidar Ali, and won a victory at Porto Novo on 1st July, 1781, followed up by two more successful actions in September; he was, however, unable to drive Haidar Ali out of the Carnatic. But Haidar Ali died, and peace was made with his son Tipu. The news of peace between Great Britain and France reached India in July, 1783.

The Marquis Cornwallis became Governor-General in 1786, and remained in Office until 1793. He introduced the Permanent Settlement into Bengal, and established a Supreme Court at Calcutta. He further completed a plan which had been begun under Hastings, for separating the duties of the Collectors from those of Civil judges in Bengal. This scheme was later extended to Madras and Bombay, when those Presidencies had grown into great territorial divisions of India.

## CHAPTER 6

### *Non-intervention*

THE period whose history has been dealt with in the last chapter really ended with the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings. For in 1784 Parliament passed a law which made important changes in Indian affairs. In effect, it transferred the direction of civil, political, and military affairs from the hands of the Company to those of the Governor-General and the President of a Board of Control, leaving such matters as business policy to the Court of Directors. The Board of Control consisted of one of the principal Secretaries of State, four Privy Councillors, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Governor-General's Councillors would in future be three only, including the Commander-in-Chief.

The Act declared that the British nation did not wish to pursue schemes of conquest in India, and the Governor-General was not allowed to make wars except in self-defence or in defence of friendly princes.

The system of Government established by this Act remained practically unaltered until 1858, except in one important particular. Lord Cornwallis, in 1786, declined to take office as Governor-General unless he were given more authority. The Governor-General was therefore given power by another Act to overrule the majority of his Council in special cases, and to act on his own responsibility. Further, the offices of Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief might be combined in one person.

The new Governor-General was 47. He was thought well of as a soldier, despite his enforced surrender to Washington at Yorktown. He was also a man of very high character, and enjoyed the fullest confidence of Parliament. In short, he had the power for which Hastings had often sighed in vain. If the Act mentioned above



had been passed ten years earlier Hastings would have been able to achieve a great deal more.

Lord Cornwallis had come to India strongly in favour of peace and non-intervention, and against all alliances, but this policy could not succeed under the circumstances. Tipu was feared by all his neighbours, and he was fanatically hostile in particular to the British Government. He was furious on learning that the Governor-General had allowed the Nizam two battalions of Sepoys with guns, on the understanding that they should not be employed against the allies of the Company. For Tipu was not an ally of the Company!

In December, 1789, Tipu invaded Travancore, which was under the Company's protection. Cornwallis immediately made an alliance with the Nizam and the Marathas, and declared war. But two campaigns were necessary, and it was not before 1792 that the allies had driven Tipu into his capital of Seringapatam. A treaty peace was made which stripped him of half his territory. The English obtained Malabar and Coorg, and Tipu paid in addition a sum of 330 lakhs. The Nizam and the Marathas divided the rest of the ceded territory. Tipu tried to get his revenge upon the English. He negotiated with the Marathas, with Afghanistan, and with the French, whose soldiers of fortune were serving in Hyderabad and with Sindhia. From the French he received in 1799 a belated letter of encouragement from Bonaparte in Cairo.

After his wars in Mysore, Cornwallis aimed at securing peace in southern India by inducing the Nizam and the Marathas to join him in a treaty guaranteeing against Tipu the territories possessed by each at the end of the war. The Nizam, who feared the Marathas, agreed. The Marathas, who meant to attack Hyderabad, refused.

Owing to the Maratha attitude, the effort to secure a settled state of things in southern India was unavailing. Nor was Lord Cornwallis successful in dealing with Oudh and the Carnatic. Oudh was in danger from Sindhia and



THE HOSTAGE PRINCES, SONS OF TIPU, DELIVERING THE TREATY INTO  
THE HANDS OF LORD CORNWALLIS  
*From the original by Mather Brown*



THE EMBASSY OF THE VIZIER OF OUDH TO MEET LORD CORNWALLIS IN 1788

*Rischgitz*

Berar; the Carnatic was threatened by Tipu and the Peshwa. Both Oudh and the Carnatic relied on the troops of the Company, and would have been overrun if these had been taken away, yet their payment to meet the cost of the Company's troops was often in arrear. Cornwallis failed to devise a remedy.

He left India in August, 1793, and was succeeded by Sir John Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, who had done fine work under Cornwallis. He was described by a friend as "A good, well-meaning man, as cold as a dog's nose." Cornwallis, however, found in him "a peace of mind which nothing alarms, being built upon a solid foundation."

Anxious to observe both the letter and spirit of Pitt's Act, he rejected the plea of the Nizam for an alliance which would protect him. Even when the Nizam was threatened by both Tipu and the Marathas, Shore would do nothing, and allowed the Company's recent ally to be attacked by a Maratha army. Even the two subsidized battalions were not allowed to join him. He was surrounded, and capitulated, agreed to a degrading peace, and returned to Hyderabad hating the English.

Cornwallis's own Presidency of Bengal was peaceful and well governed. But as Governor-General he lost a good deal of the power he had inherited from his predecessor.

## CHAPTER 7

### *Expansion*

IN *The Rise and Expansion of British Dominion in India*, Sir Alfred Lyall has written that the foundations of the British-Indian Empire were "marked out, in haphazard, piecemeal fashion by merchants; the corner-stone was laid in Bengal by Clive, and the earlier stages were consolidated by Hastings." But the remaining work was done by a number of men who, though less well known, did some very fine work.

Richard Colley Wellesley, Earl of Mornington, better known by his later title of Marquess Wellesley, came to India in 1798, after considerable experience as a member of the Board of Control. He was a great friend of Pitt, and had the confidence of Parliament. He thought that the Indian princes should be allowed to keep their positions only by surrendering their independence. His Governor-Generalship, therefore, opens a new era. At the moment of his arrival, people were rather afraid that there might be more trouble with the French. Tipu was known to be in touch with the French at the Nizam's court, and even with the French Directory in Paris, where he was enrolled as "Citizen Tipu" in a republican club. And Napoleon was in Egypt, with his eyes turned Eastward. The new Governor-General resolved that the control of the now helpless Mogul Empire should pass neither to the local Mohammedan governors, to the Maratha Confederacy, nor to the French, but to the British.

The Nawab Wazir of Oudh was in arrear with his payment for the aid of the Company's troops, and offered land instead of cash. In 1801, by the treaty of Lucknow, the Doab, a fertile tract between Ganges and Jumna, together with Rohilkand, were ceded. In the south,

the Nizam saw that it would be to his own interest to become a useful ally. By a treaty signed in 1798 he bound himself not to employ any European without the Company's consent, and the French troops at Hyderabad were disbanded. There remained Tipu, defeated, but not conquered, by Cornwallis. He refused to have anything to do with the English, and an English army, with a contingent of the Nizam's, marched from Madras into Mysore State, while another English column advanced from the West. Tipu retired to Seringapatam, and made a stout defence, but the capital was taken by storm and Tipu died, fighting bravely, in the breach.

The English commander was General Harris, who had under him a young Colonel, brother to the Governor-General, whose name, Arthur Wellesley, was to become one of the greatest in Indian, and English, history. Colonel Wellesley played an important part in rapidly restoring order when the troops had got out of hand in sacking Seringapatam. He stayed there for a time, as Military Governor, and later in the year was made commander of the Company's forces in Mysore, and responsible, also, for the civil government. He governed an awkward province with a due sense of Indian rights, and pacified with skill. He also made his troops respect Indian feelings.

In the second Maratha war, Wellesley fought in the Deccan, and within a few months he won the decisive battles of Assaye and Argaum, and captured Ahmadnagar. Lord Lake, in Hindostan, won pitched battles at Aligarh and Laswari, and took Delhi and Agra. In 1803 Sindhia and the Bhonsla Raja of Nagpur sued for peace.

Sindhia gave up all claims to the territory north of the Jumna, Orissa was forfeited to the English, and Berar to the Nizam. Holkar alone remained in the field, maintaining his army by raids through Malwa and Rajputana. In the campaign against him Colonel Monson made a disastrous retreat through Central India, and in the



THE BATTLE OF SERINGAPATAM 1800

siege of Bhurtpore Lord Lake was repulsed with heavy losses. This repulse is one of the few instances of a British army in India having to turn back with its object unaccomplished.

During his six years as Governor-General, the Marquess Wellesley carried out most of his great territorial scheme. In 1805, the Mogul Emperor, Shah Alam, was a mere puppet under British protection. The North-western Provinces were under British rule. In the South the Madras Presidency existed almost as it is to-day, and the Peshwa was a vassal of the Company. The territories of the Bombay Presidency, however, were not built into their present form until after the last Maratha war in 1818.

The disaster to Colonel Monson's force in July, 1804, was what led to Lord Wellesley's recall in 1805, though he had wished to resign in 1802. But the Directors had never approved of his forward policy, which had led to so great an increase of territory, and it is clear that his wars and conquests, however brilliant, had been very costly. Lord Cornwallis was induced to succeed him in the hope of bringing things back to the state the government had prescribed in 1793. There was even a proposal to impeach Wellesley, but this was not pressed.

Lord Cornwallis arrived in India for the second time in 1805, but he was now old, and broken in health. He died before he had been three months in the country.

His immediate successor was Sir George Barlow, a civil servant of the Company, who as a *locum tenens* could only carry out the orders of his employers. Disregarding engagements, he abandoned the Rajput chiefs to the mercy of Holkar and Sindhia by removing protection from the Rajput States. The Nizam immediately began plotting with the Marathas.

In 1806 came a mutiny of sepoys of the Madras army, at Vellore. Two companies, with their officers, 113 of all ranks, were massacred. Order was restored by British



and Indian cavalry from Arcot, the hero of being a Captain Gillespie, afterwards an exploit here has been celebrated in a spirit Sir Henry Newbolt, in *The Island Race*. The cause of the mutiny was an order on dress which grossly offended the religious feeling Hindu and Mohammedan sepoys. The chiefs were executed and the battalions which he were disbanded.

In 1813 the Company's Charter was again this time for twenty years. At the same time, monopoly, excepting for the tea-trade with abolished.

In 1814, Lord Minto was succeeded by the Marquis of Moira, afterwards Marquess of Hastings, who Wellesley's conquests in Central India, and the territories of the Bombay Presidency now are now. Two important wars occurred: one the Gurkhas of Nepal; the other the last war Marathas.



southern parts of Burma were inhabited by people from the Coromandel Coast. The Buddhist religion, professed by the majority of the people of Burma to-day, is supposed to date from A.D. 164. Burma was invaded from China on the north-east, India on the north-west, and Siam on the south-east. The invaders became the ruling races, and resolved themselves into three kingdoms, Arakan, Ava, and Pegu, and all professed or adopted the Buddhist religion. There were wars among the three, but Buddhism, its civilization and culture, survived all.

In the sixteenth century, Pegu and Tenasserim, visited by travellers, were flourishing centres of trade. Some European adventurers, during Portuguese supremacy, helped the Arkanese to extend inland; they occupied Chittagong, and terrorized the Ganges delta. About 1750 a dynasty, founded by Alaungpaya (or Alompra) made their capital at Ava on the Irrawaddy; their descendants reigned until 1885. They conquered Burma and overran Assam, then encroached upon the British districts of Bengal. They rejected peaceful proposals with scorn, for they were accustomed to easy conquests. They had received tribute from the Shans on the east, southward they had annexed the Irrawaddy delta and Tenasserim, northward repelled a Chinese invasion, conquered Arakan in 1785, Manipur in 1813, and Assam in 1816.

These conquests, with their almost complete isolation, their belief that their kings' throne was the centre of the world, its arms invincible, its culture supreme, made the Burmese arrogant and overbearing. In 1818 they demanded from the Governor-General the surrender of Chittagong, Dacca, and Murshidabad, under threat of war. After a series of frontier incidents in 1823 they seized an island off the coast with a force ordered to capture Calcutta, and another force invaded Cachar. Burmese occupation of Cachar would lay open Lower Assam. Cachar was declared a British Protectorate, and Company's troops moved to the frontier; jungle and

stockade fighting followed, and on 5th March, 1824, war was declared.

An expedition sailed from Madras to Rangoon, which became the main base of operations; General Archibald Campbell commanded, with 4000 British and 7000 sepoy, and some gunboats. The naval escort was commanded by Captain Frederick Marryat, R.N., novelist; one of the vessels was *Diana*, the first steamer used in an Eastern war.

Rangoon was mainly populated by Talaings, who were expected to rise against the Burmese, but the Burmese deported them wholesale, leaving the delta a waste. Campbell's worst enemies were malaria, dysentery, and scurvy, and his medical, supply, and transport services were poor. 15,000 died in hospital. The war lasted two years, costing five millions sterling. In 1826 the King of Ava signed the Treaty of Yandabu, abandoning all claim to Assam, and ceding Arakan and Tenasserim, which were already in British occupation.

In Bharatpur (Bhurtpore), a Jat Central India State, disputed succession led to the British intervening. The fortress was taken by storm, by troops under Lord Combermere, in January, 1827, thus removing the reproach of Lord Lake's failure in 1805. This was important, because it was believed throughout India that Bharatpur was impregnable.

## CHAPTER 8

### *Reforms and Problems*

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK, who succeeded to the Governor-Generalship in 1828, had served twenty years before as Governor of Madras, and was an experienced soldier and diplomat. He had also shown himself to be a good financier, and the Directors were looking for such a man. He inherited a deficit, and his economy and his good fortune were such that he left a surplus of £1,500,000.

Two of his most striking reforms were the abolition of *sati* (burning of Hindu widows) and of *thagi*. The practice of *sati* was detested by educated Hindus. Former Governor-Generals had not liked to interfere with any religious custom, and even now many Indians, and even some Europeans, opposed the abolition of this dreadful rite by law. It was said that in 1817 no less than 700 widows had been burned alive in Bengal! The holy places of the Hindus show many white pillars, each one of which commemorates such a sacrifice. Bentinck carried his point, and it was declared in 1829 that henceforth abettors of *sati* would be held guilty of culpable homicide.

*Thags* were members of a secret society of murderers, bound by oath to perform the rites of the bloody goddess Kali, though membership was not restricted to Hindus. They usually murdered their victims by strangling. Another name for the thag was "phansidar," or nooseholder. They travelled in gangs, and dressed as merchants or pilgrims, preyed upon and plundered unsuspecting genuine travellers, living on such money and other property as they found on their victims. A special *thagi* department was formed in 1829 to deal with these wretches, and in nine years 1562 *thags* were arrested in various parts of India. One alone is said to have confessed to 719 murders!

It will be useful to notice impressions of social life in India at this time, formed in the mind of an unbiased observer. Dr. Reginald Heber travelled much in India, and kept records of what he saw. He noted general tranquillity in British territory. In Benares, he found that the military had been called out only once in twenty-five years, on account of a riot between Hindus and Mohammedans which would have ended in the latter being wiped out but for this action. He said that the people of Upper India were generally well content with the Company's government. But something yet remained of the days when "no man was sure that he might not at any moment be compelled to fight for his life or property." The people were still of violent habits, and everyone found it desirable to take his arms with him on a journey. When he travelled from Allahabad to Cawnpore, all his servants were armed with spears, and some had added enormous sabres. In Calcutta, he noticed that people were imitating the English in everything. Wealthy Indians drove the best horses and the most dashing carriages, and a leading man had given a dinner recently in honour of the Spanish revolution.

In 1833 the Company's Charter was again renewed for twenty years, and, as usual, a Select Committee of Parliament made recommendations as to future policy. Important provisions of the Act of renewal were: The Company's territories were declared to be held "in trust for His Majesty." The Company would be simply a governing agency; it would no longer engage in any kind of trade. The Governor-General became "The Governor-General of India in Council." The Council would be strengthened by a Legal Member, to sit only at legislative meetings. Penal law and procedure were to be on English principles, paying "due regard to the rights, feelings, and usages of the people." No native of India would be barred from holding any office under the Company by reason of religion, birth-place, descent, colour, etc.

To give effect to the Act of renewal of the Charter, and to a consequent dispatch of the Directors, Lord Bentinck declared that the money for education should be devoted to English education alone, and that English should be the official language of India. The Company, ignoring distinctions of class and caste, supposed that English education would filter through the better-educated Indians to the masses who could neither read nor write. Educated India was revolutionized. For good or ill, this was the greatest change since the coming of Islam.

Bentinck did not wish profit-making to be any longer the chief aim of the Company. The real power was now held by Parliament and the Cabinet. The British nation was now responsible for the right use of the Empire which blind fate, rather than design, had built up in India.

Lord Auckland became Governor-General in 1836, and a new era of war and conquest began. In 1761 a battle had been fought in which the English had no part, between the invader, Ahmad Shah, and the Maratha powers, about sixty miles North of Delhi, at Panipat. The Marathas were defeated, and during the confusion which followed the British had to create a new power from the wreck of the Mogul Empire. Ahmad Shad held court alternately at Kabul and Kandahar.

In 1826, Dost Muhammad established himself as Amir at Kabul. Ahmad Shah had died in 1773. Shah Shuja, who had been for years a refugee in British territory, in 1834 failed in an attempt to recover the throne. Dost Muhammad was too firmly established. He was ready to promise anything to Captain Burnes (who arrived on a mission from Lord Auckland) if it would help him to win Peshawar. Auckland wanted a more subservient ruler at Kabul, and determined to replace Dost Muhammad by Shah Shuja. In August, 1839, this refugee was escorted by a British force and enthroned at Kabul, and Dost Muhammad became a State prisoner at Calcutta. The British force remained at Kabul for two years.



### THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

The famous Khyber Pass, through which the British armies twice marched during the Afghan wars of 1839-42, and which was again forced in the Afghan war of 1878-80

For Pic 601



In November, 1841, Burnes was assassinated in the city, and Sir W. Macnaghten, political officer, was also treacherously murdered at an interview with Akbar Khan, Dost Muhammad's son. The General commanding the troops was at a loss. The British force, 4000 men with 12,000 followers, began their march southward in deep snow, and practically the whole perished from cold and the fire and knives of the Afghans. A solitary horseman, Dr. Brydon, reached Jalalabad, alone.

In 1842 Auckland was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough. Two columns, under Pollock and Nott, met at Kabul in September, and blew up the great bazaar. The surviving British prisoners were recovered, and the army marched back to India.

In the same year, Sir Charles Napier defeated 12,000 men under Amir Singh, ruler of Sind. In 1844 Ellenborough was recalled, and was succeeded by Sir Henry Hardinge.

The break-up of the Mogul Empire gave the Punjab Sikhs land and power. Sikhs in the north, Marathas in Southern India, divided between them what remained of the Empire. Ranjit Singh, who had made an army officered by Europeans, mostly Italian and French, died in 1839. He left no capable son; Lahore was scrambled for between rival commanders, ministers, and queens, who all plotted with the Afghans. The chief pretender, Nao Nihal Singh, objected to the British passing through the Punjab.

The Khalsa army was weakened by the folly of ousting Generals Cant and Avitabile, and giving the command to elective committees. The confusion in the Sikh kingdom had obliged the Government to strengthen their frontier garrison. On 11th December, 1845, the Sikh army, estimated at 50,000, with 150 guns, crossed the Sutlej and invaded British territory. Sir Hugh Gough, with about 17,000 men and sixty-nine guns, marched to meet them. The Sikhs fought, as always, with immense courage, and

they deserved better leaders. They were defeated successively at Mudki, Firozeshah, Aliwal, and Sobraon. At Firozeshah the British loss was 2415 killed and wounded; that of the enemy was believed much greater. The Governor-General, himself a distinguished soldier, was in Gough's camp, and after Aliwal he ordered a band to play "The Queen." The Sikh bands, across the river, repeated the tune. The battle of Sobraon was decisive, the Sikhs losing about 1000 men and all their artillery. Ten days later, the British entered Lahore.

Hardinge decided not to annex the Punjab, but he took certain territories. The Sikh army was limited to twenty-five battalions and 12,000 cavalry, and the Maharaja was forbidden to employ European officers without permission.

In the following October, when Shaikh Imam-ud-Din led a rebellion in Kashmir, 17,000 of the Sikhs who had fought in the late campaign helped a British force to quell it.

Hardinge received a peerage, and returned to England in 1848. The Earl of Dalhousie succeeded him. He earnestly desired peace, but was forced into two wars, and to more annexations, though Hardinge had left convinced "that it will not be necessary to fire another shot for seven years."

The second Sikh War was provoked by the murder of two British Officers, Vans Agnew and Anderson, at Multan, when Mulraj the Sikh governor, organised a revolt. But the Sikh army was routed at Gujrat in February, 1849, and Lord Dalhousie decided to annex the Province. Henry and John Lawrence, and later Robert Montgomery, were appointed to rule the new Province. The North-west Frontier was fortified, roads were made, slavery abolished, and the Province was extremely well governed.

## CHAPTER 9

### *The States*

IN 1853 the Company's Charter was again renewed, as it proved, for the last time. The renewal was not for a definite time, but for as long as Parliament should see fit.

Between 1818 and 1857, relations with the Indian States were practically the same as they are to-day. By 1805 the British forces had shown themselves to be superior; State armies had disappeared; treaties had been made with all the important rulers. Though a Mogul Emperor was still at Delhi, the Company was acknowledged to be in control. The States of Gwalior, Indore, Dhar, and Dewas were formed and the Rajput landholders ousted from the greater part of their possessions, being only allowed to keep certain lands by paying tribute for them. They strongly objected to this and seldom paid the tribute unless they were forced to do so. But Sir John Malcolm and Lord Hastings made agreements with them and with other native landowners, which made them very much more friendly. It is due to them that the British Government and the Indian States are on such good terms to-day.

In 1856, the last year of his rule, Lord Dalhousie ordered the annexation of Oudh, saying that the British Government should no longer support a government which caused so much suffering to millions of people.

General Outram, Resident at the Court at Lucknow, took control of the government of the State. The king, though refusing to recognize the justice of his Deposition, bowed to the inevitable, and settled at Garden Reach in the enjoyment of a pension of £120,000 a year. Oudh was thus annexed without a blow; but this measure, looked

back upon by Dalhousie with pride, was perhaps the act of his rule which most alarmed the Indians.

Viscount Canning succeeded Lord Dalhousie in February, 1856, and in the following year began one of the stormiest periods in the history of India—the Mutiny.

## CHAPTER 10

### *The Mutiny*

It was almost exactly a century after the battle of Plassey, which, more than any other single event, had established the rule of the English East India Company over the greater part of India, that the great revolt, known to all the world as the Indian Mutiny, shook for a time the foundations of that rule.

Its causes were partly civil and partly military. There had been very great extensions of dominion, especially during the seven years of Lord Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship. During this period the great province of the Punjab had been annexed by conquest, and the kingdom of Oudh had been suppressed and its ruler removed to dwell as a pensioned State prisoner in Calcutta. These and other such changes gave to those countries a better and more just and honest government than they had before. But many of the people preferred the old ways, bad as they were, because they were used to them, and many of the landholders and traders were discontented.

The Company had not kept a proper balance between its European and its Indian troops. As its territory grew, more and more Indian recruits enlisted and were trained as soldiers, or *sepoys* as they were called. They cost much less than British men, and that was the reason why there was no corresponding increase in the number of British. In Bengal, there was only one British soldier to every twenty sepoys. In the whole of the vast territory between the Indus and the Irrawaddy there were scattered some 36,000 soldiers of British race.

The sepoys knew that regiments of British soldiers had been borrowed from India to fight in the Crimean War (then recently ended) and that these had not been replaced. Probably they thought that they had all been killed, and

that the British army was thereby weakened. They knew also that Britain was a small country, and supposed it to be inhabited only by a few thousand gentlemen and officers, merchants and clerks. And they knew that, much nearer to India, we had lost 4000 fighting men in the retreat from Kabul—a retreat from an Afghan Mohammedan army—and had lost heavily in conquering the Sikhs in the Punjab.

Recently an Act had been passed decreeing that sepoy must be prepared to cross the sea when required, on service. To the Brahmins and Rajputs, of whom the Bengal army was largely composed, this looked like a deliberate attack upon their religious principles and privileges.

These ideas were fomented by agitators everywhere, and many sepoy had worked themselves into a dangerous mood, when "the greased cartridge incident" occurred. The smooth-bored musket was about to be discarded in favour of a rifle. For use with the new weapons, new cartridges were required, and these cartridges were greased. A factory workman at Dum-Dum, where they were being made, in a quarrel with a sepoy, taunted him, saying that the religion of the sepoy would soon be destroyed, because they would have to handle the fat of cows and pigs. To the Hindu, the cow is a sacred creature, while the pig is unclean and hateful to the Mohammedan. This story was repeated in barracks and bazaars, and it was soon being said that Lord Canning intended to force Christianity upon the army and people.

Indians are credulous folk, and nowhere in the world do rumours arise more easily, take more fantastic forms, or spread more rapidly, than in India. In vain their British officers denied the cow- and pig-fat story, and exposed the absurdity of the idea of compulsorily Christianizing the sepoy. The story continued to spread, and to be believed, and whole regiments were sullen and uneasy. At Barrackpore, on the 29th March, 1857, a sepoy of the

34th Native Infantry fired at an officer and wounded his horse, in front of the guard-house, and the guard looked on and did nothing until another officer, a General, galloped up and forced them at pistol-point to arrest the would-be murderer. The man was eventually tried and hanged, but after long delay, and the regiment was merely disbanded. (That sepoy's name was Mangal Pande, and the nickname "pandies" was afterwards bestowed by the English soldiers upon all sepoy mutineers.)

On the 10th of May, at Meerut, thirty-six miles from Delhi, the storm broke in earnest, and something, at least, of the strength and meaning of a movement to which many in high places had seemed blind, was revealed.

Eighty-five troopers of the 3rd Native Cavalry had been imprisoned for refusing to receive their ammunition. While the European troops of the garrison were assembling for church-parade on that Sunday evening, some hundreds of the 3rd Cavalry mounted without orders and rode to the jail, where the sepoy guard fraternized and helped them to release their convicted comrades. Then, carrying the released prisoners behind them, they rode back to their lines. Meantime, sepoys of the 20th Infantry had shot Colonel Finnis of the 11th, and several of their own officers.

Apparently, the suddenness of this outbreak struck both civil and military leaders with paralysis, for practically nothing towards dealing effectively with the situation was done. Meerut had a comparatively strong European garrison, but the General in command was content to establish pickets and bivouac his force on the parade-ground, while the prisoners from the flung-open and unguarded jail, with the *budmashes* (idle and disorderly rascals) of the city, plundered, burned, and murdered in the civil station, and the Indian troops of the garrison were on the march for Delhi. When morning came, not a sepoy was to be seen, but still there was no pursuit of the mutineers. The civilians, men and women, who had

escaped death, saw in the light of dawn the blackened ruins of their homes and the brutally mangled corpses of friends and children. Still nothing was done. Inaction was the order of the day.

In the early morning, at Delhi, the troopers of the 3rd Cavalry, the vanguard of the long column of mutineers who trudged and straggled along the Meerut road, passed the sepoy guard at the city gate and presented themselves before the palace of Bahadur Shah. This aged sovereign still kept his court there, though his Imperial power had long departed. The guard at the palace, thoroughly disloyal, welcomed the cavalry as comrades. Captain Douglas, commanding the guard, was immediately killed, and Mr. Fraser, Commissioner of Delhi, Mr. Hutchinson, the Collector, the Rev. Jennings, chaplain, and his daughter and another lady, soon shared his fate. Bahadur Shah was distressed, but entirely powerless to restrain the sepoys. In the city, a mob of *budmashes*, mingling with the mutineers, attacked and looted the bank, and murdered the manager and his family. Every European or Eurasian found was killed without mercy. Two young Eurasian telegraphists managed to escape just before their instruments were destroyed by the sepoys, after telegraphing news of the outbreak to other stations.

In the cantonments of Delhi were three regiments of Indian Infantry and a battery of artillery. The British officers, firmly believing that whatever other sepoys might do, *their* men would remain "true to their salt," led them towards the city gate to attack the Meerut crowd, still pouring in. But as they reached the main guard, without any orders the men began to fire, not at the mutineers, but on their own British officers; four of these were shot dead at once, and Colonel Ripley wounded. Some companies halted and stood as if undecided, and at that moment a terrific explosion shook the earth. It was that of the great magazine, not far from the palace.

Stored with many tons of ammunition, the maga-



was in charge of Lieutenant Willoughby. Two other British officers and six British N.C.O.'s made up to nine the number of Europeans in the place. They had barricaded the entrance, placed guns at commanding points, and prepared to defend the building. Their Indian subordinates had at once shown that they were not to be relied on; most of them had climbed the wall and bolted. The officers had then laid a train to the interior, ready to destroy all the stores when they could no longer hold the magazine. A number of sepoy's from the palace came and demanded the surrender of the place, whereupon the handful of British had opened fire. But the attackers, now swarming outside, scaled the walls with ladders, two of the officers were disabled by wounds, and it became evident that the defence must be overwhelmed. Willoughby gave the order to fire the train, and the little party shook hands and prepared to die. By some freak of fate, Willoughby and four of the N.C.O.'s found themselves still alive among the ruins; the attacking party were killed in large numbers, by the explosion and by falling masonry.

The roar of the explosion, heard for many miles, seemed to the mutineers near the city gate a sign that mutiny had triumphed; they fired a volley at a group of British officers, killing three. The remaining officers went to a building of the main-guard, and rescued a number of ladies who had taken refuge there, lowering them by a rope made of belts and sashes into the fort ditch, and getting them out into a jungly place, where they all hid for a time. The remnant of this party, after much suffering and privation, reached places of comparative safety outside the walls.

Within the city, a "bag" of about fifty European and Eurasian men and women was made by the sepoy's, who dragged them to an underground chamber in the palace, and massacred them there after five days of miserable confinement, flinging their bodies into the river. So the

cruel sport went on; by the 16th of May, no Christian soul remained alive in Delhi.

Delhi, a strong place, built to the design of a famous modern engineer, and the capital of the ancient Mogul dynasty, was now in possession of several thousand mutineers, and was a rallying-point for all the rebels. The Governor-General was by this time alive to the gravity of the crisis, and he saw that the recapture of Delhi was the first and most urgent necessity. "Make short work of Delhi," he telegraphed to the Commander-in-Chief. It was easy to give such an order, but the difficulties and unavoidable delays to be overcome before "short work" could be made were immense.

In Calcutta itself were two British regiments, and not another white soldier nearer than Dinapore, nearly 300 miles away "as the crow flies." In 1857 India was not, as it is to-day, served by a huge network of railways; the only line then open was from Calcutta to Raniganj—fifty miles. Even good roads were not plentiful. Northwestward from Dinapore was Benares, with but a handful of British gunners, and no other troops. Allahabad was no better off, nor Cawnpore. Lucknow had a British regiment, needed for defence of the new province of Oude. Still further north and west one came to Delhi and Meerut, and far beyond these to the Punjab, a great newly-conquered country with a dozen scattered British battalions. And the summer, the hot weather of the Plains, of whose effect upon Europeans Macaulay had written so eloquently, had well begun.

By road and river, a battalion could not be moved from Calcutta to Cawnpore in less than twenty-five days, and even in the emergency of the time it was not considered safe to deprive the capital of its British garrison. (The Government had "turned down" the offer of the European residents to raise a corps of volunteers for defence service, though it was accepted later.)

Troops had been summoned from Madras, Burma,

Ceylon, and Mauritius, and the Governor of Bombay had been directed to hasten, as far as was possible, the return of those who had been engaged in the just completed Persian campaign. Lord Elphinstone had suggested that a special fast steamer should be chartered to carry a request for troops to England (at that time there was no cable communication), but Lord Canning declined to take this action. Obviously, some time must elapse before the arrival of overseas reinforcements could be expected.

For the present, then, in the great area between Calcutta and Delhi, the Government was powerless to take active steps to retrieve the situation.

Surprisingly, the garrison of Meerut remained so long inactive in its lines that the country people in the district believed that *all* the English there had perished in the outbreak of the 10th of May. At last, however, upon the order of the Commander-in-Chief, General Anson, the Meerut Brigade marched on the 27th of May. On the 30th and 31st they defeated and drove from a strong position a large body of the enemy. On the 1st June they were reinforced by 500 Gurkhas under Major Reid; by the 7th all the available forces were united; and on the 8th they advanced on Delhi under General Barnard. On the same day they fought an action almost under the walls of the city. The enemy was in great strength and made a firm stand, supported by guns heavier than those of the British. But Barnard's cavalry and horse artillery, skilfully used, and a resolute charge by his infantry, forced the mutineers to give way, and finally they abandoned their guns and camp equipage and retreated into the city. Barnard immediately occupied the long Ridge which overlooks Delhi, and formed a camp commanding the ground up to the city walls. From that moment, the issue was clear to both sides; the fate of Delhi would decide the fate of India.

Lord Canning had expressed the opinion that the

artillery with the force from Meerut was sufficient to "deal with" Delhi, and John Lawrence in the Punjab had believed that on the approach of the British force Delhi would open its gates. Both these prophets, one of whom had scant knowledge of India, while the other had both knowledge and experience, proved to be wrong.

With the artillery at his disposal, it was impossible for Barnard to breach the walls, and his force was far from being strong enough to "invest" the place, that is, to blockade it by surrounding. From many directions bands of mutineers streamed into Delhi. Their commanders could not control them, and they plundered at will, robbing and ill-treating the inhabitants, and treating the aged king with disrespect. But, though Bahadur Shah could not be said to reign in its stead (for he had but the shadow of power) the East India Company had ceased to rule. Law and order had disappeared, and such of the inhabitants as had possessions left to lose secretly bewailed the downfall of the British Raj.

The sepoys, however, continued to display, when in action, the discipline they had been taught by the Company's officers, and, with determination and courage, to attack the British position. In six weeks, there were more than a score of such attacks, all of which were repulsed, but not without severe loss to the British. These suffered losses also from disease, for their tents were waterlogged by heavy rains, and the bursting of the monsoon brought cholera into the camp on the Ridge. On the 5th July Sir Henry Barnard died, and was succeeded by General Archdale Wilson.

On the 16th August there marched in, from the Punjab, Brigadier General John Nicholson, at the head of 1100 British infantry, a field battery, and 200 newly raised and but little trained Multani cavalry. This force had been used by Nicholson to maintain order in the Panjab, and could ill be spared from that province.

Nicholson, like many other officers of the Company's

army, had served for many years in civil administration, and in that work he had been highly successful, yet he had not ceased to be a soldier. He was distinguished by remarkable physical strength and endurance, as well as by his fierce resolution and the power of instant decision. He was a great leader, and great leadership was needed by the little army on the Ridge.

On the 4th September the long-awaited siege artillery arrived, with an escort of 200 British infantry and a battalion of Biluchis. The army before Delhi now amounted to nearly 9000 men, more than a third British. Now that the Punjab had made its contribution, there was no hope of further reinforcement for a long time. A general assault upon Delhi must risk disaster, but, on the other hand, the army was being daily weakened by sickness. In war, as in sport, risks must be taken. The senior officers were all of opinion that now, if ever, the decisive blow must be struck; Nicholson was frankly determined that if Wilson hesitated longer he would move, in a council of war, that he should be superseded.

Wilson, who was ill, and worn out by work and anxiety, yielded to his advisers and issued orders for a general assault. Four batteries were erected and the heavy guns and mortars mounted in position. From the 7th till the 13th of September they fired continuously. The enemy replied, bringing guns into the open and keeping up a hot fire of musketry; during those six days the British casualties numbered more than 300.

The actual assault was made on the 14th, before day-break, by four columns, each of about 1000 men. The siege batteries suddenly fell silent, and 200 men of the 60th ran out in skirmishing order to cover the stormers' advance. The walls were ablaze with musketry, and many of the stormers carrying ladders were hit, but the others pressed on, and the breach in the Kashmir bastion was carried. Two engineer officers, Home and Salkeld, rushed with a small party carrying powder-bags to the Kashmir

gate. Half the party were shot down, but the two officers succeeded in destroying the gate, and the first column, commanded by Nicholson with Campbell under him, crossing the great ditch by a plank, poured into the fortress. The attackers then started to clear the ramparts; Nicholson pressed on into the city. In the act of leading a party against a knot of sepoys who had brought up a gun and made a stand, Nicholson fell, with a bullet through his chest, and was carried out of the press, to the Kabul gate.

The British were now within the city, but they held only about a quarter of the defences, and they had lost in killed and wounded sixty-six officers and more than 1000 men, and Wilson's position was by no means secure. Fortunately, the enemy did not counter-attack.\* The men were rallied, guns were mounted, to shell the interior strongholds, and the captured ground was consolidated.

On the 21st the unfortunate Bahadur Shah, who had fled to the tomb of Humayun, north of Delhi, was captured and brought in by Captain Hodson; his two sons, and a grandson, were shot dead by Hodson—an act which caused much controversy and some indignation at home.

A Royal Salute from the guns proclaimed that there was again British rule in the Mogul capital.

After lingering in great pain for eight days, John Nicholson died, and was buried just outside the Kabul Gate. At the age of 37, he had reached high rank in the civil as well as the military service. Ever since, his memory has been revered by the men of the Punjab as that of one almost more than mortal. He had lived long

\* Lord Roberts, in *Forty-one Years in India*, states that there were signs of a counter attack, but some handsmen having struck up the air of "Cheer, boys, Cheer!" a popular song of the day, the troops all began to sing and cheer with all their might, and the enemy thought better of their intention.

enough after receiving his wound to see the success of the action in which he had borne a gallant part, for the great and storied city of Delhi was now once more completely in British hands.

### THE TRAGEDY OF CAWNPORE

The city of Cawnpore stands on the south bank of the river Ganges, a thousand miles from its mouth. In 1857, when the population of the city was about 60,000, it was famous for the manufacture of leather goods, saddlery, harness, boots and shoes, cheroot cases, etc.

The place has been a first class military station since the end of the eighteenth century. In the spring of 1857 the garrison included three sepoy regiments, the 1st, 53rd, and 56th Infantry; the 2nd Cavalry and a company of artillerymen brought the Indian strength to 3000 men. The European element of the station consisted of the officers of the sepoy battalions, sixty men of the 84th, seventy-eight invalids of the 32nd, which regiment was quartered at Lucknow, fifteen of the Madras Fusiliers, and fifty-nine of the Company's gunners; total, some 300 soldiers. The European civilians, officials of Government departments, railway engineers, the wives and children of these, and a considerable number of people of mixed descent, amounted in all to between 700 and 800 souls.

About twelve miles up-stream, at Bithur, stood a great palace, where, in princely state, lived Sirik Dhundhu Pant, since better known to the detestation of mankind as the Nana Sahib. He had immense wealth, and was accustomed to offer splendid entertainments to Cawnpore society, with whose members he affected to be on the friendliest terms. He never accepted invitations in return, because the Government refused to recognize his claim to be of royal descent, or to fire salutes in his honour.

The garrison was commanded by General Sir Hugh Wheeler, a distinguished veteran of the Company's,

Service. When the news came of mutiny at Meerut and Delhi, he naturally thought at once of a refuge for the British and Eurasian women and children. The magazine, a fortified place well stocked with guns and ammunition, was an obvious choice, but to occupy it he would have had to remove the sepoy guard. So, with that well-intentioned avoidance of anything which might bring matters to a head, which was so common and so fatal at that time, he ruled out the magazine. He chose, instead, a piece of land to the south-east of the city, where two long hospital barracks, one with a thatched roof, had been built but not occupied. Here, on the 21st of May, within a hastily thrown-up entrenchment, the breastwork of which was hardly more than four feet high, and not bullet-proof at the top, the women, children, and non-combatants were concentrated. The General had sent to Sir H. Lawrence at Lucknow asking him to send any men he could spare to Cawnpore, and Lawrence, despite his own need, generously sent eighty-four men of the Queen's 32nd.

On the 4th of June, the 2nd Cavalry and 1st Infantry mutinied. The people in the entrenchment knew this from the glare of conflagration over the civil lines. The other sepoys soon followed suit, but at first the entrenchment people were not molested; the mutineers started for Delhi, the magnet of rebels. So in Cawnpore they only burned houses, sacked the treasury, and broke open the jail. But the Nana Sahib, whom they welcomed as a leader, did not relish the idea of going to Delhi, and being subordinate (and subordinate to a Mohammedan, for of course he himself was a Hindu) when he might be master at Cawnpore. He believed that the British power was already in eclipse, and that he had a great opportunity to gratify at once his ambition and his malice. With four regiments, plus his own Bithur retainers, to what height of power and splendour might he not rise?

At Kalianpur he stopped the march, and



sepoys back by promises of plunder and luxury. He appointed a subadar (Indian equivalent of captain) to command the cavalry with rank of general, and other Indian officers were made colonels. It is notable that these officers' names show that they were all Hindus.

Back they all came, and the British, who had flattered themselves that they had only to wait until they could get boats and drop down stream to Allahabad, found this pleasant hope shattered. The old General ordered all British officers and men to join the women and children, and while the returned mutineers gorged themselves with the spoil of city and cantonment, and slaughtered any Christians whom they encountered, this concentration was rapidly carried out, and the feeble earthworks were manned.

The siege began. Wheeler now commanded about 900 men, including 200 British soldiers with 100 officers and 100 loyal Indian officers, sepoy, and servants. With artillery and musketry fire the entrenchment was swept continuously. The people were crowded and the heat was intense. The sole water-supply was from a well, upon which the enemy poured a constant fire. With their one heavy and two field guns, the besieged held the foe at bay and caused him heavy loss. The defenders fell fast; their dead were lowered into a disused well. They made sorties and spiked guns and bayoneted the gunners, and victoriously repelled two general assaults. Their daily rations were reduced to one handful of flour and one of peas, and their ranks were thinned by sickness as well as by shot. Their thatched roof was fired, and their small stock of medicines and medical comforts was destroyed. Towards the end, the women stripped themselves of their body-linen to make powder-bags for the guns. Women and boys worked like men, and civilians like soldiers. There was a small group of civil engineers, who in their surveying for a railway not yet built, had acquired a correct judgment of distance and sharpness of vision which made them very dangerous as sharp-

shooters behind the sights of the Enfield rifle. There was a plentiful supply of small-arms, and half a dozen loaded weapons lay ready to each man's hand behind the parapet.

"Towards the end" has been written, and, of course, the end came. The Nana, tired of watching (through a telescope, from a sheltered spot) the endless fusillade and the fruitless attacks of his soldiery, fell back on treachery, the weapon best suited to his nature. A letter was written by his confidant and secretary, Azimulla, son of a *kitmutgar* or footman, a rascal who knew English well. He had visited England upon the business of his master, and flaunted a jewelled turban in London drawing-rooms. The letter was for General Wheeler, and promised safe-conduct to Allahabad for all "not connected with the acts of Lord Dalhousie." Sir Hugh stoutly opposed the idea of surrender, and the younger officers, with him, wished to fight until the end. The older ones, however, pointed out that both food and ammunition were almost exhausted, and that the women and children could not "fight until the end." With misgivings in his heart, the General gave way, and the terms were accepted. The garrison were to be allowed to march out with their arms, and boats and provisions for the river journey were to be provided.

So, on the 27th, twenty days from the beginning of the siege, the indomitable remnant, who had borne its horrors so bravely, moved down to the boats, and embarked at a spot since called by the English "Massacre Ghat." And as the forty clumsy and unhandy thatch-roofed vessels shoved off into the stream a bugle sounded, and at the signal the sepoy drawn up on shore opened fire with guns and musketry. The men in the boats were shot down; the boatmen fired the thatch before jumping overboard; some boats were sunk. The women and children were dragged ashore. Of the forty boats only one got away. Of her passengers, two officers, Mowbray Thompson and Delafosse, with Privates Murphy and

Sullivan, won to safety by fighting and swimming their way to the territory of a friendly Raja.

These four proved in the end to be the only survivors of the whole company of the besieged, because the women and children, in number rather more than two hundred, who had been brought ashore from the boats and confined, huddled together in a small house called the Bibigarh, were all butchered on the 15th and 16th of July by the order of the Nana Sahib and by the hands of his servants, and their bodies thrown into a well.

This ghastly crime (which brought a terrible vengeance) was perpetrated on the day before the arrival of General Havelock, who, with a force of British infantry and artillery, Sikhs, and Irregular Cavalry, under 2000 in all, had defeated 5000 commanded by the Nana at a place twenty-two miles from Cawnpore on the 17th.

The well which was the tomb of those victims of treachery and cruelty is now the centre of a peaceful garden surrounded by a high wall, whose gate is always shut fast, save when it is unlocked by the British sergeant in charge to admit a European visitor. Over the well stands a marble angel with bent head, and round the stone coping is the carved inscription—

These are they which came out of great tribulation.

### THE LEAGUER OF LUCKNOW

Lucknow is about sixty miles north-east of Cawnpore. Since the news of the Meerut outbreak, the civil Chief Commissioner of the lately annexed Province of Oudh, Sir Henry Lawrence, had been appointed to the command of all the troops in it. In the cantonments of Lucknow were one British regiment of infantry, H.M.'s 32nd, 700 strong, and a weak company of British (the Company's) artillery. Of native troops there were the 7th Light Cavalry and the 13th, 48th, and 71st regiments of infantry. In the neighbourhood, also, were two regiments of Irregular Native

Infantry and one of Irregular Cavalry, two batteries of Native Artillery, and a large force of Native Military Police, mounted and foot. Thus, the Indian troops were to the British in the proportion of nearly ten to one, the actual numbers being roughly 7000 to exactly 750.

Sir Henry, a man of great sagacity and experience, saw what was coming much earlier than most people. Oudh had long been the main recruiting ground for the Company's Bengal Army, and he knew the temper of those proud and pampered soldiers, and the restive feelings of the people in general since the Company's rule had replaced the flagrant misgovernment of a worthless prince. The energy and wisdom of Lawrence had been employed to their utmost in his great efforts to preserve the wavering allegiance of both army and people. But even Lawrence could not avert the trouble; he could only postpone it for a little. He himself became convinced of this, and his precautions were begun in April.

The Residency, his own headquarters at Lucknow, was a large, fairly strong building on the north-west of the city. North of it, with some cultivated land between, flowed the river Gumti. To make it defensible and provide quarters for the European troops, he began to have huts and other obstructions cleared away, to lay in supplies of food and other stores and ammunition, to arrange for water supply, and to form outworks. He also removed four guns of a native battery to the barracks of the British troops.

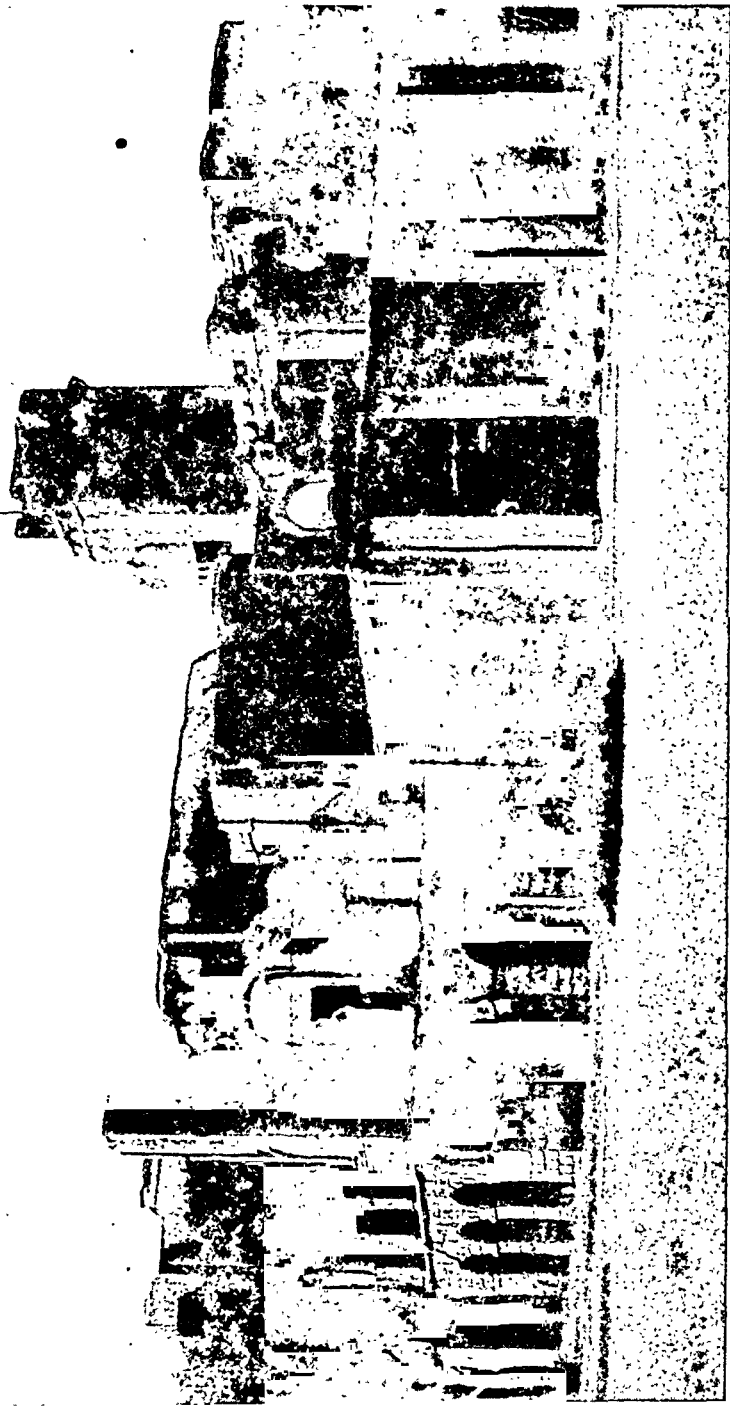
On the 3rd of May some Irregular sepoy's behaved mutinously, and were disarmed before the 32nd and artillery. On the 14th a telegram informed Lawrence of the Meerut outbreak and the seizure of Delhi. He moved half of the 32nd into the ground about the Residency, commanding the Iron Bridge, shifted the bridge of boats nearer, and sent selected sepoy's to occupy the Machchi Bhawan, a fortified but disused building about

half a mile away. On the 19th the spare ammunition was stored there under a European guard, and families and sick men were moved into the Residency enclosure.

At evening gun-fire (9 p.m.) on the 30th, mutiny broke out, with the murder of officers and burning of houses. About 500 sepoy remained loyal. The siege of the Residency began, and heavy fire of artillery, and of musketry from the houses near the enclosure, showed that the enemy were in earnest. The defenders just had time to remove guns and stores other than ammunition from the Machchi Bhawan, and to fire a train, blowing up the building. The next day, Sir Henry Lawrence, while transacting business with his Adjutant-General, was mortally wounded by a shell which burst in the room. To the deep sorrow of the whole garrison, he died on the 4th of June. He ordered that his epitaph should be simply: "Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty."

The command of the garrison was taken over by Colonel Inglis of the 32nd, and the chief civil authority by Major Banks. On the 19th a general assault by the mutineers was repulsed with heavy loss. Next day Major Banks, watching the enemy operations from an exposed position, was shot dead. A native spy in British pay brought in assurance of speedy relief. The enemy now laboured hard at digging mines to blow up the defences, such as they were; the Cornish ex-miners of the 32nd defeated this plan by counter-mining.

Cholera and small-pox broke out in the dwindling garrison. Inglis was cheerful and indefatigable; for more than two months he never undressed. By the 19th August 125 British had been killed; many others were disabled by wounds or sickness. Angad, a sepoy pensioner, brought in a letter from General Havelock, saying that he could not reach Lucknow for twenty-five days, and containing the words "do not negotiate, but rather perish sword in hand." Not a very encouraging message!



THE RUINED RESIDENCY AT LUCKNOW AFTER THE SIEGE

On the 5th September another general assault was repulsed. Rations now had to be reduced. Many of the non-mutinous sepoys deserted.

General Havelock had made two attempts to advance from Cawnpore to beleaguered Lucknow. He had had much hard fighting and caused the enemy much loss, but on both occasions found his force insufficient to enable him to reach Lucknow, and had reluctantly to return. But in September General Outram had sent on troops from Allahabad, and on the 16th he himself reached Cawnpore with further reinforcements. This chivalrous and generous soldier has been called "the Bayard of India." He was senior in rank to Havelock, but insisted on joining his force as a volunteer, so that Havelock might have the credit of commanding the operations. Havelock's total strength was now more than 3000, in two brigades, consisting of 109 British Volunteer Cavalry, 202 gunners, and 2388 infantry, with 341 Sikh infantry and fifty Indian Cavalry. Colonels Neill and Hamilton commanded these two brigades.

In Tennyson's poem, "Lucknow," there is a line which occurs several times—

"And ever upon the topmost roof the banner of England  
blew."

The Lucknow Residency, hammered by shot and shell almost to pieces during the siege, may still be seen, and on the flagstaff at the top of the tower the Union Jack always flies. It is the only military post in the Empire where the flag is not hauled down at sunset. That particular flagstaff keeps its flag flying night and day, until it becomes necessary to hoist a new one.

On the 18th September the two brigades crossed the Ganges, leaving 400 convalescents to garrison Cawnpore. On the 22nd, fifteen miles from Lucknow, they fired a royal salute, to inform the garrison. Next day, wading

knee deep in water, they engaged and defeated an enemy force, capturing a position called the Alam Bagh, a walled garden, with six guns. Wet and hungry, for supplies were not "up," but in good heart, for they had news of the recapture of Delhi, they bivouacked for the night. On the 25th, under very heavy fire from houses and breastworks held by the enemy, and with severe losses, they entered the city. After further hard fighting, in which Colonel Neill was shot dead, they entered the Residency, weary but triumphant. In the last six days they had suffered 535 casualties.

But Lucknow was not yet relieved; it was only reinforced. For no means of transporting the many sick and wounded, and the women and children, were available. In that beleaguered garrison, 350 Europeans had fallen in action, and the deaths from disease had been many; heavy work and shortage of food had played havoc.

Outram now assumed command, and extended the lines of defence, taking in some lofty and substantial buildings which gave accommodation for his men. In the weeks that followed there was more fighting and more privation. The final relief came when Sir Colin Campbell, the Commander-in-Chief, fought his way with his troops through the city, reaching the Residency on the 17th November.

Two days later, the gallant Havelock died of dysentery. At last transport was collected and it became possible to remove the sick and non-combatants with a convoy to Cawnpore, and thence to Allahabad, which was strongly held by British troops. The City of Lucknow was not captured and secured until the 21st of March, 1858.

The foregoing sketch of the phases of the Mutiny, three acts of the great drama, enacted on three stages of the theatre of war, are far from completing the story of that momentous conflict. There were other battles, other





THE RELIEF OF LUCKNOW—THE MEETING OF SIR COLIN CAMPBELL AND  
GENERAL HAVELOCK

E.N.A.

tragic episodes, and other valiant exploits, and the campaign of re-conquest covered a great area of country. It was not until the end of 1859 that India was restored to something like normal condition.

It must always be remembered that the Sikhs, Punjabis, and Gurkhas fought stoutly against the mutineers, and thereby helped greatly to bring back peace and order. Also that the native troops of the great Presidencies of Madras and Bombay were but little affected by the mutiny. Even so, the effort of the British troops would have been almost desperate but for the invaluable aid and support of Indian Princes, such as the rulers of Patiala, Jhind, and Nabha, of the Nizam, our ally from the days of Clive, and of the sovereign of our nearest independent neighbour, Nepal.

But, in itself and in its consequences, the Mutiny was not only the greatest event in the history of British India, but a notable one in the history of the world. We will end this chapter with a quotation from Colonel G. B. Malleon's *Indian Mutiny*, published in 1912—

The gradual conquest of India by a company of merchants inhabiting a small island in the Atlantic has ever been regarded as one of the most marvellous achievements of which history makes mention. The dream of Dupleix was realized by the very Islanders who prevented its fulfilment by his countrymen. But great, marvellous as was that achievement, it sinks into insignificance when compared with the re-conquest, with small means, of that magnificent empire in the year 1857-8.

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CHAPTER II  
*India Under the Crown*

1861 TO 1914

IN the years which followed the Mutiny, the India of modern times took shape, as the schemes of those who had gone before came to maturity and their effect was fully apparent. Dalhousie, who by his annexation policy was thought by many to have helped to bring about the Mutiny, had certainly prepared the way for the period of reconstruction which followed it.

He had founded the Department of Public Works, and opened the Ganges Canal. He helped to get the Overland Route established, and to get steam communication with England via the Red Sea. He turned the first sod of the Indian Railways, and ordered the first telegraph line across India. He introduced cheap postage, and the Indian system of Public Instruction is still largely his. All these great undertakings bore good results under Lord Canning, who kept to his predecessor's progressive policy.

Under the new conditions, the Secretary of State had greater power than had ever been possessed by the Board of Control. By means of the telegraph he could exercise constant control. His Council of experts was not a representative body, and could easily be overruled.

In India itself, as means of communication improved, authority was gradually centralized. The Independence of District Officers diminished, their writing and reporting increased; less time remained for their friendly intercourse with and study of the people. These conditions and tendencies continually became more marked, and they must always be reckoned with in studying the history of modern India.

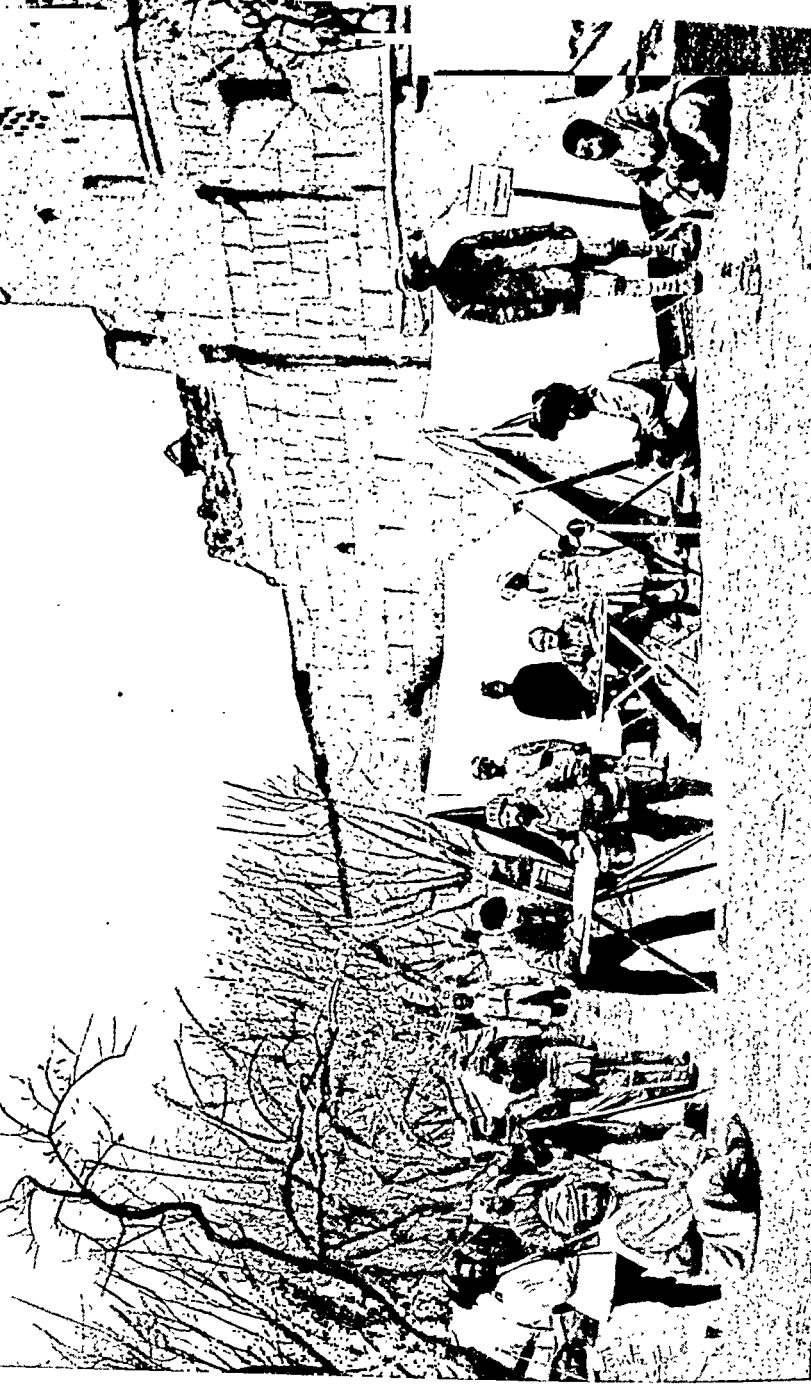
## *India Under the Crown*

Lord Lytton, who succeeded Lord Northbrook 1876, ruled until 1880. Lord Northbrook had resigned over a disagreement with the home Government, who wished him to persuade the Amir to receive a British Resident at Kabul. On 1st January, 1877, Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. Unfortunately that year brought also one of the worst and most extensive of Indian famines. The most strenuous exertions, and spending of 11 million pounds on relief, could not prevent more than five million people losing their lives.

Lord Lytton had failed to induce the Amir to receive a British Resident. In 1878 the Amir (Sher Ali) was detected in favouring Russian intrigue; a Russian envoy was received at his court with marked honour. This led to war after the time fixed for reply to an ultimatum which the Viceroy was allowed by the home Government to send, had expired, even though the Amir had agreed to receive a mission. The action of the Viceroy was undoubtedly hasty and ill-considered. The British troops advanced; Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord) Roberts defeated an Afghan army at Peiwar Kotal; Sher Ali fled to Russian territory. Peace was signed with the new Amir, Yakub Khan, who accepted an envoy.

Sir Louis Cavagnari was appointed, and went to Kabul where, in September, 1879, he and his escort were murdered by Afghan soldiers. Kandahar was occupied by General Stewart. Roberts thereupon led a British force through the Kurram Pass and occupied Kabul on the 12th October. Yakub Khan abdicated and was deported. A religious rising of the Afghans followed. Wali Sher Ali Khan was made ruler of Kandahar and supported by British troops. Abdur Rahman Durani, a nephew of Sher Ali, carrying Russian money, came from retirement at Samarkand to win the Afghan throne.

Lord Lytton, was replaced by the Marquess of Ripon who was eager to reverse his predecessor's policy, but circumstances were too strong for him. In June, Sher Ali



THE SURVEY AND SIGNALLING HEADQUARTERS DURING THE BRITISH OCCUPATION OF KABUL, 1880  
E.N.A.

younger son, Ayub Khan, set out for Kandahar, and on 27th July he defeated a British brigade under General Burrows at Maiwand, and invested Kandahar. Roberts marched from Kabul, covering 313 miles in twenty days, and relieved Kandahar, completely defeating Ayub Khan's army on 1st September. Sher Ali Khan resigned, and Ripon recognized Abdur Rahman as Amir.

Lytton put forward a scheme for enabling more Indians to join the Civil Service.

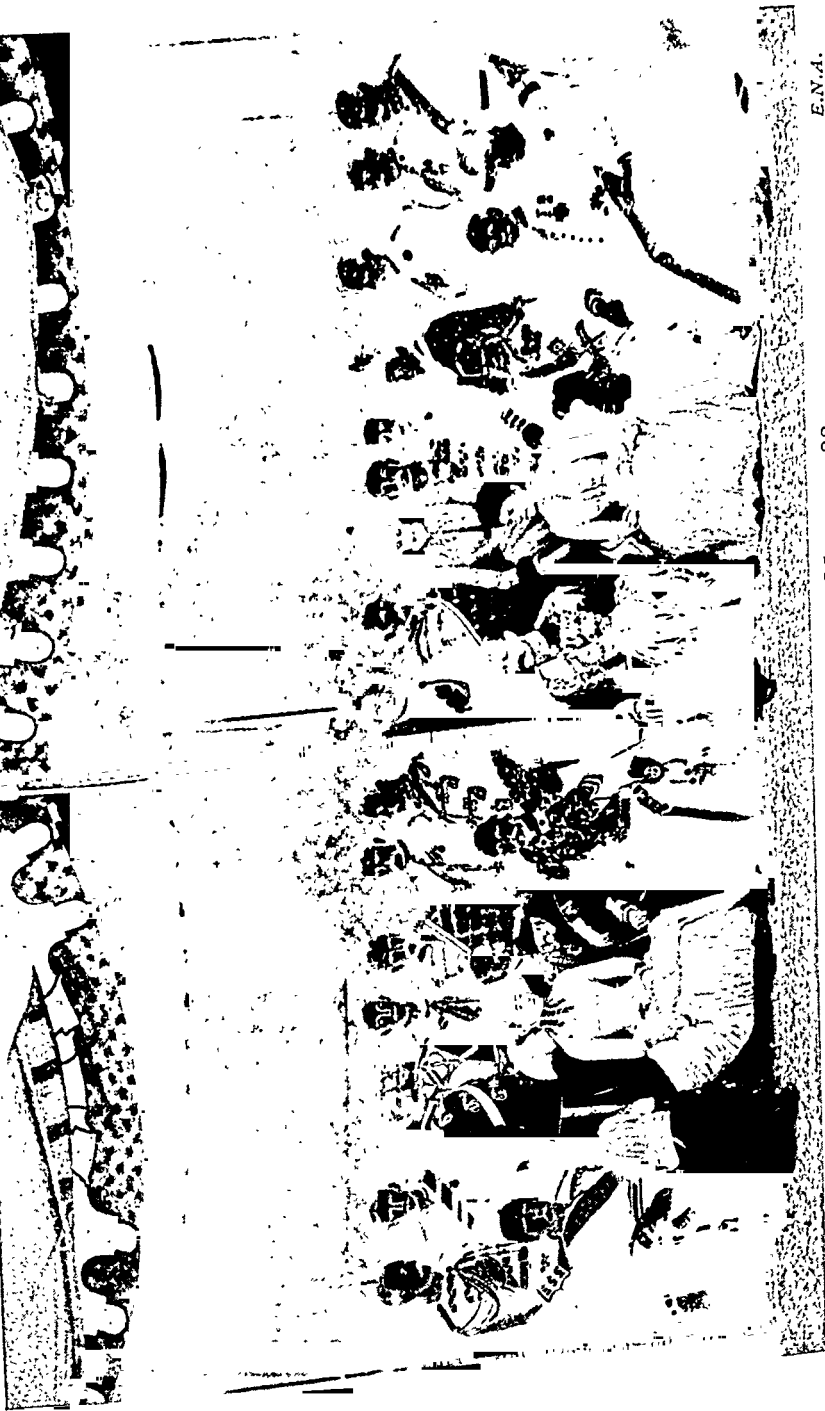
In 1882 a contingent of Indian troops took part with the British forces in the successful occupation of Egypt, and displayed qualities of great endurance and gallantry. A selected detachment of Indian officers and men afterwards had an enthusiastic welcome in England.

The Earl of Dufferin became Viceroy in 1884, and in the next year held a magnificent durbar at Rawal Pindi for the reception of the Amir, which strengthened relations with Afghanistan. Later, when there were rumours of possible war with Russia, the Indian States made loyal offers of their troops and resources.

Late in 1885 the misconduct of King Theebaw of Upper Burma, with his ill-treatment of British subjects, led to another war. British and Indian troops steamed up the Irrawaddy, the river forts were bombarded and taken, and Theebaw's capital, Mandalay, was occupied without serious opposition. The king and queen were removed and banished to the coast station of Ratnagiri in Bombay Presidency, and on 1st January, 1886, Upper Burma was annexed.

In 1887, the Jubilee (or fiftieth year of the reign) of the Queen-Empress Victoria, was celebrated with enthusiasm all over India. Lord Dufferin retired in 1888, and was created Marquess of Dufferin and Ava. He was succeeded by the Marquess of Lansdowne.

Important events of Lord Dufferin's Viceroyalty were the earliest annual meetings of the Indian National Congress. The first of these took place at Bombay on



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THE RAWALPINDI DURBAR OF MARCH, 1885  
The Duke of Connaught, with Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India, Lord Roberts, and others

December 28th, 29th, and 30th, 1885. They were attended by seventy-two delegates, chiefly lawyers, schoolmasters, and journalists, collected from cities or large towns of various provinces. The only Mohammedan delegates were two attorneys of Bombay. The delegates were thoroughly loyal to Britain, which had given them order, railways, and above all, Western education, but they desired that the people should take their fair share in the government. The Congress continued to hold annual meetings, with largely increased numbers of delegates, and soon began to make more demands. Several sympathetic Englishmen, such as Sir David Yule, Sir W. Wedderburn, and Sir H. Cotton, were prominent in its counsels.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston assumed the office of Viceroy in 1899. He dispatched a British force to South Africa, which held Ladysmith and saved Natal from Boer invasion. His offer of 10,000 horse and foot from the Indian army was not accepted, but later, some Indian troops joined in the relief of the besieged legations at Peking during the Boxer Rebellion.

In 1901 Indians in general mourned for the death of the Queen-Empress Victoria, whose interest in and affection for India and its people had been recognized by everyone.

Many Indian princes, and a contingent of Indian troops representing almost every part of India, were conspicuous in the pageants which accompanied the rejoicings for the Coronation of the King-Emperor Edward VII in August, 1902. On 1st January, 1903, His Majesty was proclaimed at a great durbar in Delhi, in the presence of over 100 rulers of separate States, whose united population amounted to 60 millions of people, from the Arab Sheiks of Aden to the Shan chiefs of the Mekong. With this great ceremony, happily followed by a reduction of taxation, the new reign was begun. In fact, however, the Western-educated classes



were discontented, though the princes and the masses of the people were peaceful and unchanged.

Lord Curzon resigned in 1905. He must ever be remembered as that of a very great Viceroy. He never forgot the importance of those who live by the land, the great majority of the Indian people. He went everywhere, never spared himself, and saw everything. Among the things for which he ought always to be remembered is the loving care which he showed for the noble buildings and memorials of India. For the people, his care was unceasing.

Lord Minto, lately Governor-General of Canada, great-grandson of a former Viceroy, succeeded Lord Curzon.

For several years a small band of Western-educated young Hindus, with the idea of liberating India from foreign rule, and remembering stories of Russian secret societies, dreamed of launching a revolution in Bengal.

In December, 1907, the train carrying the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was derailed by a bomb; in that month a British District Officer was shot in the back at an Eastern Bengal railway station. In the tract of country where these disturbances mainly took place there were only ninety-two British officials. The Civil Police were below strength; the sole reserve force consisted of fifty Military Police. Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the Lieutenant-Governor, was refused support by the Viceroy for a determined attempt to stop schoolboys taking part in political meetings, and resigned in consequence.

The Congress met at Surat in the same month, and ended in tumult, the Extremists trying to impose their will upon the Moderates, who were led by Mr. Gokhale. The attempt failed, and for some years the Congress was mainly Moderate. But the ferment in Bengal was bearing more fruit. In May, 1908, two English ladies were killed at Muzafferpur, Bihar, by a bomb intended for a British magistrate. The investigation of this crime disclosed a criminal conspiracy, and the leader with nineteen others

were convicted. The Tilak press in Bombay praised the bomb-throwers, and Tilak was tried and sentenced to six years' imprisonment for trying to provoke enmity and hatred against the Government.

Another murder, that of Mr. Jackson, a District Officer, revealed the existence of a Brahman secret society on the Russian model. Bengal continued to produce a crop of murders, gang-robberies, bomb-outrages, assassinations of Indian police officers, but the Bengal propaganda took little root in other provinces, partly because of resolute resistance by Sir Reginald Craddock in the Central and Sir John Hewett in the United. In Bombay Sir G. Clarke baffled the revolutionaries.

In November, 1908, on the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's proclamation, another was issued by the King-Emperor to the princes and people, undertaking to suppress anarchy, and to extend the principle of representative institutions.

Soon after Lord Minto was succeeded as Viceroy by Lord Hardinge of Penhurst, who won some popularity by showing sympathy with the "passive resistance" movement organized (in South Africa) by Mr. Ghandi, a Hindu barrister from Guzerat, whose name now came into prominence.

In December, 1911, the King-Emperor (George V) and Queen-Empress presided at a Coronation Durbar at Delhi. His Majesty announced that the capital of India would henceforth be, not Calcutta, but Delhi, and that Bengal would be re-united as one Province and that Assam would be a Lieutenant-Governorship.

The ruling Princes offered their homage at the Durbar. The occasion was marked by grants of land, a large gift for education, the release of prisoners, extra pay for the ranks of the Army and the lower grades of the Civil Service, and the Indian Army was declared eligible for the Victoria Cross.

The revolutionary societies became quieter, but were

still active in secret. In December, 1912, when the Viceroy and Lady Hardinge made a State entry into the new capital, mounted on an elephant, a bomb was thrown from a window, which killed an Indian attendant and seriously wounded the Viceroy. The firm and courageous behaviour of their Excellencies excited high admiration. The person who threw the bomb was never arrested.

Revolutionists continued their activities in Bengal from time to time, but those who sympathized with them were largely in disfavour. Great numbers of Indians were fully aware of the progress of the country under the Crown. Some notable examples were referred to by Sir John Hewett, Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, in a farewell speech in March, 1912. His personal knowledge of India dated from 1877. The value of India's external trade was then 84 millions sterling; in 1912 it was 270 millions. In the same period the railway mileage had grown from 7000 to 32,000. Irrigation by canals had increased by 55 per cent, the area under cultivation by nearly 12 per cent, and the value of land by 100 to 150 per cent.

## CHAPTER 12

### *The Great War, and After*

THE tragedy of Sarajevo, on the 28th June, 1914, when the Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand was assassinated, attracted comparatively little notice in India. But the series of events which followed from it, and which no one in India could have foreseen, affected Indian history not less than that of the rest of the world. In the weeks between that tragedy and the outbreak of the war, commerce proceeded as usual, agricultural prospects were good, relations with the frontier tribes were peaceful. In Bengal, the underground activities against the Government and property-owners had grown to be familiar, and there was no violent outbreak to attract special interest. The Mohammedans felt a sense of grievance because Britain had not taken the part of Turkey in the recent war with Greece.

But when August the 4th came, and Britain was at war, her enemies, both in and out of India, were disappointed. When, four days later, the Northern Army received mobilization orders, not only all ranks of the army, but leaders of public opinion in all sections, heard the news with enthusiasm. On the 8th September, the Viceroy was able to inform the Imperial Cabinet that the rulers of the Indian States had, with one accord, rallied to the defence of the Empire, and to telegraph a long list of those Princes whose offers of active personal service he had accepted. Lord Hardinge in his telegram gave instances of the spontaneous loyalty and generosity of the Chiefs. Some of the troops from their States had already embarked. The telegram stated that the same spirit had prevailed throughout India, and that hundreds of applications, from people of all classes and creeds, for

opportunities to prove their loyalty by personal service, had been received.

The total strength of the troops sent abroad from India amounted to 23,000 British and 78,000 Indian ranks. In addition, all but nine of the regular battalions of British Infantry, and the bulk of the regular artillery, were sent to England, to be replaced in India by thirty-five Territorial battalions and twenty-nine Territorial batteries. The Government of India had never before sent overseas a force of more than 18,000 men. But now an Expeditionary Force, consisting of two infantry and two cavalry divisions, fully organized and equipped, was provided for France. Simultaneously, a mixed force was sent to East Africa and an infantry brigade to the head of the Persian Gulf, and the latter was increased to a complete division after the declaration of war with Turkey.

The services which were rendered by these troops are too well known to need detailed information here. They served in a kind of war of which they had never dreamed, and in lands where the climate, and all other conditions, were entirely different from anything which they had known. A fitting tribute to their conduct was pronounced by Lord Curzon in an eloquent passage in his "Indian Corps in France."

In the combatant ranks, Punjabi Mohammedans, Sikhs, Gurkhas, and Rajputs were conspicuously numerous. Recruiting from races without military traditions met with only limited success. The Presidency of Madras, with a population of 40,000,000 recruited 51,000 combatants, and Bombay with 20,000,000, 41,000, while the Punjab, with 20,000,000 and Bengal with 45,000,000 recruited respectively 349,000 and 7,000. Burma's 12,000,000 contributed twice as many as Bengal's 45,000,000.

These figures are of interest because they show the greatly differing characteristics of the various sections

of the Indian peoples. It is clear that the military strength of India lies mainly in the Punjab and United Provinces, the old battleground of India, the country of the Rajputs, the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, and the Mohammedans who followed the Mogul Emperors.

In 1915 and 1916 serious riots occurred in Patna district over cow-killing at the Mohammedan festival of Bakri-id. In 1917 Hindu mobs wrecked Moslem villages in a neighbouring district, and nearly 2000 police and troops had to be called out. Except for an outbreak in the United Provinces in 1918 there were no more communal disturbances for four years.

The political effect of the War was to strengthen the demand for free institutions, while the entry of Turkey as an enemy of the Allied Powers made a disturbing impression on the Moslem community, for Turkey was the last surviving independent Mohammedan kingdom. The All-India Moslem League came into alliance with the Indian Congress, and at the end of 1916 the Lucknow Pact between the Hindus and Mohammedans settled the proportion of representatives of the two communities in the provincial and All-Indian legislatures.

On 20th August, 1917, Mr. Edwin Montagu, Secretary of State, announced in the House of Commons the Government's policy towards India. The policy included the gradual development of self-governing institutions until India should be ready to govern herself, as a part of the British Empire.

Lord Hardinge left India in 1916, and his successor was Lord Chelmsford, who had been Governor of Queensland and of New South Wales. He believed that the Imperial Government ought to make a new departure, and declare an objective for British rule in India. It was some time before word of these aims reached the Indian public. Soon after his arrival, vigorous methods under a Defence of India Act gave a decisive check to revolutionary crime in Bengal.

The fall of Kut to the Turks in 1916, after a brave and difficult defence of 147 days aroused, surprisingly little interest in India. The middle of the year 1917 was a very critical period in the War. The Revolution in Russia had deprived the Western Allied Powers of forces which, though ill-provided and not very well led, had at least obliged the Central Powers to keep large bodies of troops on their eastern front. The American effort had hardly had time to make itself felt. Great Britain, by the success of the German submarine campaign, was near the edge of starvation.

The announcement on the Indian policy of the British Government, therefore, made by Mr. Montagu on 20th August, seemed to have been made at a very bad time. There was at this time in India a feeling against the War. Stories of mismanagement and failure, brought home by sick and wounded from Mesopotamia, seemed terribly confirmed by the news of the fall of Kut. Indians could not understand why victory was so long delayed in coming to the British and their allies, and, for the first time, began to doubt if it would come at all.

The announcement was interpreted by war-weary India, not as an acknowledgment of India's loyal co-operation in a war in which the whole British Empire was concerned, but as a sop to the agitators and Congress men, who had done nothing for an Empire which they continually abused.

Mr. Montagu himself came to India and conferred with Lord Chelmsford. They published their Report in April, 1918; it was a long and very able document, and contained a detailed survey of the situation, with recommendations for the future government of India. These included: Complete popular control in local bodies as far as possible. Immediate steps towards Responsible Government in the Provinces. The Government of India to remain wholly responsible to Parliament, and its authority in essential matters to continue, until the effect

of the provincial changes had been seen. In proportion as the proposed Reforms should take effect, the control of Parliament and of the Secretary of State to be relaxed.

If, as was supposed, this was intended as a sop to agitators, it failed in its object. It was greeted by the extremists with an outburst of anger and contempt. Mrs. Besant said, in *New India*, that it was unworthy; B. G. Tilak called it "entirely unacceptable." A special meeting of the Congress was held to consider it. Sir Surendranath Banerjea and the Moderates refused to attend, and ceased membership of an institution which they had created.

The Act of 1919, embodying the policy of the Report, came into force in 1921. Single-chamber legislatures, varying in size, were established in the "Governors' Provinces" (i.e. Madras, Bombay, Bengal, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Bihar and Orissa, the Central Provinces, Assam, Burma, and the North-west Frontier Province). Seventy per cent of members were to be elected. A Franchise Committee ascertained the number of persons fit to be reasonably entrusted with the duties of citizenship, and the franchise was given to about a thirtieth, about one-tenth of the adult males. Separate representation was given to Sikhs, Indian Christians, "Anglo-Indians," Europeans, and, in most provinces, the large landholders.

The Council of State was given a maximum of sixty members, of whom thirty-four were to be elected and the remainder nominated, not more than twenty of these to be official, including nominations from the executive council. The president was chosen by the Governor-General. The electorate for this Council was small, and for the most part grouped in communal constituencies. Women were not entitled to vote at these elections.

In 1917 a Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt, an eminent English judge, had been appointed to investigate the conspiracies and outrages which had terrorized the country. Its report, published in 1918,



recommended that emergency powers should be conferred upon the Executive, and what was called the *Rowlatt Act* was passed, but in view of the *Government of India Act* (1919) it was never put in force. Its passing led to an agitation which brought to the front Mr. Ghandi, a remarkable personality. It gave him his first great opportunity, and two years later he became the leader of the Extremists in the Congress.

Before 1914, Mr. Gandhi had lived for twenty years in South Africa, and had done good work as a non-combatant in the Boer War, but he first attracted public notice by championing the cause of the Indian immigrants to that country. For several years he maintained the movement of "Passive Resistance" among the immigrants, and returning to India in 1914 he repeated this experiment on a larger scale, which naturally became larger with his accession to leadership of the Congress Extremists. The advance upon Passive Resistance was "Civil Disobedience" and "Non-co-operation." He made alliance with two Mohammedan agitators, Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali, and took a vigorous part in denouncing the terms of the peace with Turkey and stirring up race-hatred among the Moslem community. The whole of the opposition to the Administration was now united; Hindus, Sikhs, and Mohammedans joined hands, for different reasons, in a common enmity.

In April, 1918, the most violent outbreaks occurred in Guzerat, Mr. Gandhi's native province, where an Indian magistrate was deliberately burnt to death for trying to do his duty, and in the Punjab, where great efforts were made to persuade the people that they were the victims of gross oppression. The storm-centre of the Punjab was Amritsar, a city of especial geographical, commercial, and political importance. There on 10th April the deportation of two prominent agitators was followed by savage riots, attempts to sever communications, fire, and plunder, brutal murders of four Europeans, attack on

others of both sexes, and by the removal of British women and children to the fort. On the 11th two British warrant officers were murdered at Kasur, a neighbouring town. On the 12th all wires between Amritsar and Lahore were cut, and the hostile attitude of the local population in the town, and alarming news from the neighbouring country, led to a terrible act of retribution. On the 13th, in defiance of proclamations, thousands of men collected in an enclosure called the Jallianwala Bagh, and while listening to a speech were dispersed by the fire of an Indian infantry detachment in command of Brig.-General R. E. Dyer. About 379 persons were killed and a much larger number wounded, as the fire was directed for about ten minutes on the crowds trying to escape through "few and imperfect exits" from the scene. The General did not attempt to succour the wounded, for whom, as he expressed it, the hospitals were open. He believed that the safety of the Province was at stake, and does not seem to have realized that the Jallianwala Bagh was largely a *cul-de-sac*.

The rising of the Moplahs in 1921 resulted in the killing of Hindus, including women, as well as of British officials, and some of Gandhi's Hindu followers began to distrust him. He was arrested in 1922, and communal disturbances between Hindus and Moslems broke out in the old way.

In January, 1921, it was announced that Lord Chelmsford would be succeeded as Viceroy by Lord Reading, Lord Chief Justice of England. In the same month, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught opened the new Legislative Councils at Madras and Calcutta, and in February the Chamber of Princes at Delhi. The Duke left India at the end of February. The Non-co-operators had demonstrated during his visit, which, however, encouraged other people to show their loyalty. In his farewell speech, at Delhi, he appealed, as an old friend of India, to all, British and Indians, to bury the errors and

misunderstandings of the past, to forgive where forgiveness was needed, and to join hands and work together to realize the new hopes.

The Act of 1919 provided that a Commission should inquire into the working of the new constitution after a number of years. The Commission, presided over by Sir John Simon, paid two visits to India between its appointment in 1927 and April, 1929. Its Report, a very able document, was published in May, 1930. It recommended full responsible government in the Provinces. Control over the central government, but not over the Provinces, by the Secretary of State, was to be maintained. Measures should be adopted making Federation of British India and the States the ultimate goal; and Burma should be separated from India.

Because it failed to recommend responsible government at the centre, the Report was not very well received in India. Sir John Simon had recommended that the States should be asked to discuss how an All-India Government could be formed, and in accord with this came the Round Table Conference, which met in London in November, 1930. This Conference consisted of delegates from the three British political parties, with delegates from the Indian States, including the "depressed classes." The Indian Congress was not represented because it was busily employed in carrying out the programme of Civil Disobedience in India. Mr. Gandhi was still in jail.

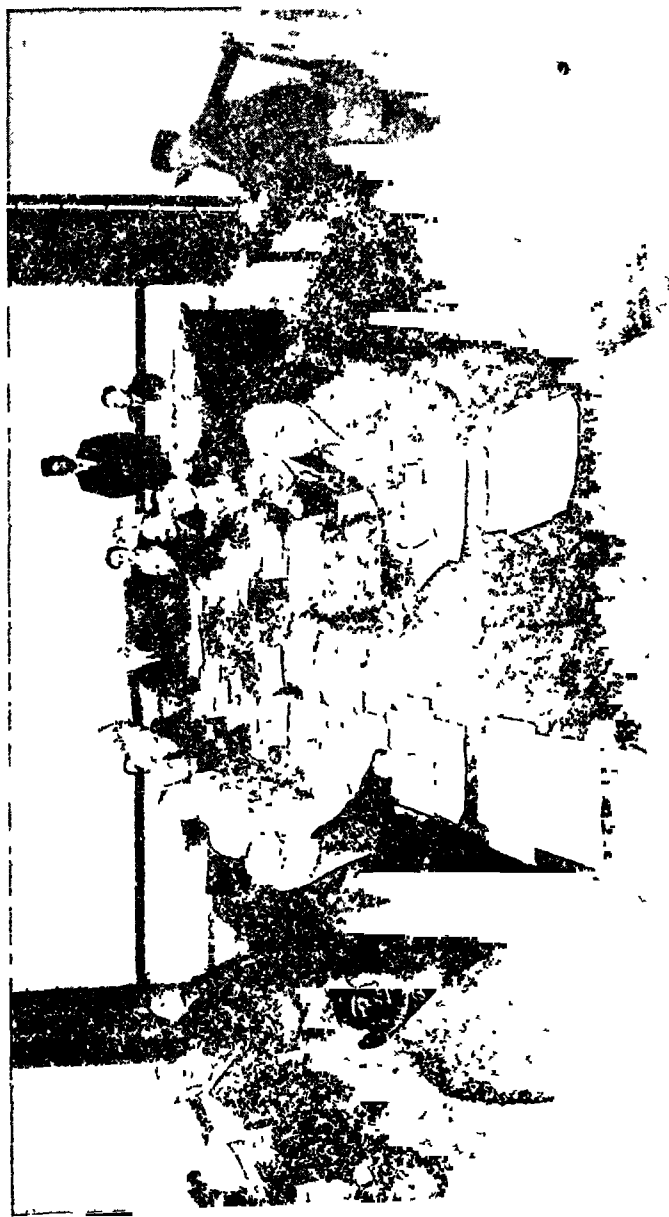
It was agreed that the States should be banded together under a Central government, which should pass laws and see that they were carried out.

In March, 1931, a "pact" was arrived at between the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, and Mr. Gandhi. The Congress agreed to drop Non-co-operation and boycotting, and those of the nationalist leaders who were in prison were released. Mr. Gandhi attended the second session of the Round Table Conference in September as the representative of Congress.



J N I

DEFYING THE BRITISH RAJ, APRIL, 1930  
Three notorious Indian women agitators defying the Salt Laws by heating sea water in the grounds of the Congress House at Bombay



THE INDIAN STATES MINISTERS MEETING AT NEW DELHI TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE  
INDIAN STATES AND THE NEW FEDERATION SCHEME

The conference was presided over by Sir Akbar Hydari, seen at the head of the table  
E N A

The Round Table Conference ended in December, 1932. Mr. Gandhi had previously returned to India and resumed Non-co-operation. In August, 1935, the Government of India Act was passed.

The Government of India Act, 1935, was intended to be a step towards making India's government similar to that of the other Dominions. It increased the powers of the Provinces to manage their own affairs, and it provided for an All-India Federation by linking the Provinces of British India with such Indian States as were prepared to enter that Federation of their own free will. Burma was separated from India.

The Act came into force in British India in 1937, with Lord Linlithgow as the first constitutional Governor-General and Viceroy, in succession to Lord Willingdon, whose Viceroyalty was made notable by his wise sympathy and balanced judgment.

By this great experiment, under the new Constitution, when fully established, hundreds of great and small autocracies will have been linked with the Provinces of British India in governing more than 330 millions of people of varied races and creeds. The future of this immense population will depend upon the ability of Indian statesmen and their good-will to work harmoniously and to use wisely and with tolerance the authority with which they have been entrusted.

annually exceeded one million sterling, was derived from a tax both unpopular and unjust, paid by the British consumer, and that this fact was proved by the lower prices paid for tea on the continent. It was also alleged that the costliness of the East India Company's establishment at Canton contributed to make the price of tea excessive. The Court disputed these statements, alleging that the lower prices on the continent were due to the inferiority of the article sold, and also that their profit from the trade had been much exaggerated. But although reiterating their view of the case, the Court did not persist in fighting a hopeless battle, and accepted the first clause abolishing the China monopoly in deference to public opinion, and merely stipulated for the short respite necessary to dispose of the stock which they were bound to keep on hand.

The second clause of the projected Bill proposed that the East India Company should be entrusted with the renewed political control of India. As it was quite clear that this concession was only made because the British Government was unprepared to accept the responsibility itself, it followed that the Company's best device to obtain increased commercial privileges was to feign reluctance to accept the great administrative responsibility of ruling India. In support of this reluctance, the Court was able to show that the revenues of India had not sufficed alone to defray all the expenses of governing it, and that the deficit had only been made good out of the profits

of the commercial operations of the East India Company. It followed as a necessary consequence that if these operations were abandoned the deficiency would have to be made good from some other quarter, as every one connected with the Company was agreed that competition with private traders would be ruinous and *c* it of the question. Practically speaking the whole question turned on this point, for although there was difference of opinion as to the extent to which the Indian revenues were deficient, and as to whether that deficiency was likely to prove permanent or not, there was complete agreement on the fact that the dividends on the Company's stock were paid not out of Indian revenue, but out of the profits of the China trade. If that trade were abolished it was essential to ascertain whence the Company was to procure its dividend, as it could not be expected to perform the onerous task of governing India without some tangible reward.

On the great subject of the deficiency of the Indian revenue some facts and figures will be useful and explanatory of the whole situation. From 1823-4 to 1828-9 the average annual deficit was not less than £2,878,000, and taking the longer period of 1814-5 to 1828-9 we find that the total deficiency was £19,400,000. These figures were the result of considering the Indian revenues as the sole financial resource of the East India Company, and testify to the fact that the Indian revenues alone were at that time unequal to the charge of governing the country



by means of an European administration. The serious deficit proved to arise from the government of India had been met by a considerable allocation of the profits of trade to the task of administration, and by public loans guaranteed by the Company. It was not an unfair or unexpected demand for the East India Company to ask before accepting the political direction of India for some guarantee as to the funds required for the accompanying expense.

While there was no room for disputing the main fact, it by no means followed that all the contentions put forward in consequence of it by the Company were well founded. Its advocates made a great point of the question of the home remittances, which then amounted to three millions sterling, alleging that there would be much difficulty in providing for their punctual and satisfactory discharge. The *modus operandi* of the Company had been simply to purchase goods in India and China, and to dispose of them in the London market, applying the proceeds to the payment of the home charges. When the commercial department of the Company was to be closed it seemed to them that no alternative was left to what was, after all, a very primitive arrangement. The most experienced bankers and merchants had no difficulty in exposing the fallacy of this belief, and in showing that the transmission of the necessary funds by bills would be easy and efficacious; and it may be pointed out that this arrangement has worked well ever since, and is still in force.

The Company was also on weak ground when assuming that because the revenue of India was insufficient for its purposes in 1829 it must necessarily always be so. Lord William Bentinck himself proved that the argument was untenable by converting a deficit of one million into a surplus of two millions, and although that was due to the preservation of peace, and the surplus disappeared when the expense of war in Afghanistan and the Punjab had to be provided for, there was still little or no doubt that the revenues of India, properly husbanded and directed, were fully equal to meeting all legitimate demands, especially when we consider that Lord William Bentinck's policy in the matter of the Málwá opium had practically ensured a valuable contribution, paid for by the Chinese drug-consumer, to take the place of the alleged payment to the Company by the English tea-drinker. Moreover no allowance was made for the effects of economy and the wide scope for developing the resources of India, which first began to taste the fruits of internal peace after the campaigns of Lord Hastings. On an impartial consideration of the question it must be allowed that the Company signally failed to prove its contention, that the resources of India must be unequal to the task of its government.

But as has been pointed out, the question of the dividend of the proprietors of the Company was apart from that of the administration of India, and on this subject it could reasonably claim every

sideration. As the fight finally resolved itself into deciding what this should be, it is only necessary to summarise here the arrangement come to. The first proposition of the Government was, that the payment of the dividends to the proprietors should be regarded as an annuity chargeable on the territorial revenue of India, and redeemable after a period to be decided, and at the option of Parliament, by a payment of £100 for every five guineas of annuity. The total of the annuities amounted to £630,000 a year, and it was proposed that all the Company's commercial assets<sup>1</sup> should be converted into money, with which a sufficient amount of Indian territorial debt should be purchased to produce an income of £630,000 a year. In other words, what was proposed was an act of substitution, the revenue of India accepting the responsibility of paying the interest on the Company's stock, and the Company assigning its possessions to the reduction of India's liabilities by a similar amount, so that there should result no addition to the burden borne by the taxpayers of that country.

As the possessions of the Company would produce a sum sufficient for the payment of the annual dividend or for the redemption of the principal at twenty years' purchase, and as its right to its

<sup>1</sup> These were estimated by the Company at not less than £21,103,000, but as £8,428,000 were questionable assets, the net total was £12,675,900, which at 5 per cent. would have produced £630,000 a year.

commercial assets could hardly be disputed, it followed that the Government's proposition was not received with much approval. But the Government knew its strength and the weakness of the Company, and it brought all the pressure it possessed to bear on the Court of Directors. In reply to the statement of the value of the Company's property, it replied that the proper valuing and realisation of its possessions would take several years, and that the renewal of the Charter had to be settled one way or the other in a few months. If the Charter was to be renewed at all the Company must accept their view of the position. Intimidated by this argument the Court gave way, and agreed to the suggested transfer between commercial and territorial claims if the Government undertook to arrange that some collateral security should be provided for the payment of its dividend. Even to this suggestion, which was highly natural under the circumstances, the Government gave only a reluctant consent. In addition to the scheme already provided, it was arranged that the sum of £1,300,000 should be taken from the commercial assets, invested in British Government stock, and with accumulated interest should form a fund that was to go on increasing until it had reached twelve millions, when any further augmentation was to cease. After considerable discussion and after a meeting of the proprietors of the Company to ratify the action of the Directors, the Government was induced to increase the sum assigned under this arrangement to 1500

millions, and with that alteration the arrangement described was carried out.

The history of these negotiations and the voluminous correspondence were placed before the Court of Proprietors at two general meetings held in March and April, 1833. At the latter, a series of resolutions were moved by Sir John Malcolm, the greatest Anglo-Indian of the day, approving the conduct and proposals of the Directors, and recommending that the terms of the Government should be accepted. The six resolutions stipulated in their order (1) that the Company should assent to conduct the government of India at the sacrifices demanded, provided they were furnished with sufficient powers, and that their pecuniary rights and claims were adjusted by a fair and liberal compromise; (2) reiterating the financial arrangement described for providing a collateral security; (3) that the administration of India should be given for a period of not less than twenty years; (4) that all measures of expense should originate with the Directors, subject to the control of the India Board; (5) that the Company should have some means of attracting publicity, through Parliament or otherwise, to its views, in any dispute it might have with the India Board; and (6) that the Court should retain sufficient power over the commercial assets to enable them to provide for the discharge of all obligations, and also for compensation to such of the commercial officers and servants of the Company as might be affected by the new arrangements.

The discussion on these resolutions occupied seven days, but in the end they were carried by the large majority of 477 to 52. The complaisance of the Court was rewarded by certain concessions on the part of the Ministers, the principal of which has already been noted in the augmentation of the fund from £1,300,000 to £2,000,000. They also withdrew the veto they had proposed for the India Board on the subject of the recall of Governors and military commanders—a proposition which had struck at the self-respect of the Company, and threatened to reduce its authority to a mere shadow. Most of the other suggestions were adopted in accordance with the views of the Company, and a Bill was drafted upon them and submitted in June to the two Houses of Parliament. The debate in the House of Commons calls for no notice. It was distinctly poor, and unworthy of the magnitude of the subject—if one brilliant speech by Macaulay be excepted. Mr. Charles Grant, afterwards Lord Glenelg, apologised to the House for asking its attention to matters at such a distance, and it was to empty benches and an uninterested audience that the scheme was unfolded for entrusting the Company with another twenty years' lease of the government of India. An attempt was made in Committee to contract the period of extension from twenty to ten years, but the precedents from 1773 were too strong to justify the reduction. The Bill was finally read in the House of Commons at the end of July, and sent up to the House of Lords.

The debate in the Upper Chamber was, as is so often the case in dealing with matters of imperial importance, more worthy of a Bill which was deciding not merely the fate of the two hundred millions of India, but the destiny of the most famous trading company the world had ever known, and which had made its achievements a part of English history. It was introduced by the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Nestor of the Whig party, supported by Lord Ripon, and approved by the Marquis Wellesley on the statement of Lord Lansdowne, but strenuously opposed on various grounds by Lord Ellenborough and the Duke of Wellington, who recorded his views of the great Company as he had known it in the days of Assaye and Argaum. The Court of Proprietors of the East India Company was again convened in August to express its approval of the Bill as passed by the House of Commons. After further discussion it acquiesced in the arrangement by a vote of 173 to 64, the reduced numbers showing the diminished interest of the Company itself in its fate, which the majority of the Proprietors may have considered already decided. On 20th of August the Bill received the royal assent, thus completing the arrangements for what was nominally the last but one, but in all important essentials the last, renewal of the Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth 233 years before.

In the course of the debate in the House of Lords the Marquis of Lansdowne referred in eloquent words to the good service Lord William Bentinck had rendered

in India, to whose 'vigour and judgment,' he said, it was due that the expenses of that country had been reduced to such a point as to show that its government could be carried on by means of its own revenue apart from any advantage of trade. The admission of natives to a larger share in the administration, and the unrestricted entrance of Europeans into the country, with rights of domicile, pointed to an increased economy and development, and those innovations had no more consistent or powerful advocate than the Governor-General, who saw in them the only way of establishing an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure in India. His direct participation in the renewal of the Charter does not transpire, although his indirect influence upon its fortunes cannot be doubted. His economies and his confident belief that the Indian territorial revenue could bear the whole cost of administration inspired, on the one hand, the Government with its main reasons for entertaining the same belief, and on the other, the East India Company with an additional motive for accepting and clinging to the government of the country when there seemed no pecuniary advantage to be derived from it. At the same time, the character of his administration had unquestionably enhanced the reputation of the English government in India, and had reached a standard beyond which the most zealous advocate of the rights of India could not at the time aspire. Yet the only part Lord William Bentinck publicly played with



regard to the renewal of the Charter was to issue a notice in the *Calcutta Gazette*, 'calling for a general illumination and a display of fireworks to celebrate the renewal of the Charter,' when the news reached India in October, 1833.

If the only verdict possible about the renewal of the Indian Charter for another term of twenty years in 1833 is that the result was a foregone conclusion, in that the Company could not hope to retain the monopoly of the China trade, and that the Government were resolved not to accept the administration of India, we still must regard it as a landmark in our connexion with the great Indian dependency which places England at the head of the empires of the world. The most unfriendly critic of the East India Company cannot deny that it had done its country excellent service. It had increased the trade of the nation in every quarter of the Eastern continent. The skill and determination of its representatives had driven a powerful rival from the field in France, a service especially valuable at a time when on the continent French arms were more fortunate than ours. In the blackest days of the American rebellion there never failed to come some cheering news from India, reviving the courage of the nation, and proving that the power of winning battles had not departed. The successes of the Peninsula were matched and heightened in their effect by the long succession of victories against some of the most formidable rulers and races of Hindustán that were achieved under

Wellesley and Hastings. In short, for the better part of a century the Company had provided the nation with the material for the greatest satisfaction in adding alike to its self-respect and financial prosperity. There would have been marked ingratitude if, without any cause shown, the country had come to a sudden and arbitrary conclusion that the Company should cease to exist.

Moreover the Company had shown its full intention to meet the loftier expectations formed by English public opinion as to our duties towards the inhabitants of India. Lord William Bentinck was sent out as a reforming Governor-General, and he instituted many reforms. If the British Parliament had taken over the control of the country it could not have done more for the people than he did. The progress of reform is necessarily slow, and whether the Crown or the Company exercised authority, there were the common obligations of government which could not be evaded by either. Lord William Bentinck's rule was contemporaneous with one of the brief periods of internal and external peace prior to the Mutiny. He turned it to the best possible account by introducing necessary economies, by carrying out essential reforms; by spreading education, and lastly by introducing the natives to a share in the work of administration. The Company which sanctioned these measures shared in their credit, and it would have been highly inconsistent, as well as ungrateful, to decree the death of a great institution at the very moment that it was giving fresh evidence of its worthiness to live.

## CHAPTER VII

### INTERNAL AFFAIRS

WE may now take a comprehensive view and give a brief descriptive account of the general administration of India by Lord William Bentinck. Under this head we have to consider the always delicate and important relations that must subsist between the central Government and the semi-independent States of India, and although his rule was pacific in a marked degree, Lord William Bentinck had to arrange more than one question of difficulty with them. We may also record in chronicle form some of those passages and events in the daily life of his government that seem to possess more than ephemeral interest. Excluding external relations and matters of foreign policy, which will necessarily form the subject of a separate chapter, in this we may attempt to describe the general course of his administration, apart from his three great reforms, in regard to *thagá*, *satá*, and education.

One of his earliest measures was to pass a Government resolution forbidding the presentation or receipt of official and other presents by servants of the

Company. The practice was in established accordance with Eastern usage, but it had led to abuses and was thought to be incompatible with the dignity of the supreme Government. This reform held with regard to the civil service the same relation as the reduction of batta did to the army. It was intended to reduce the perquisites to which the Anglo-Indian official had been accustomed under the laxer system in force when the Company was a purely commercial association, and when nobody thought of closely criticising the conduct of its agents. At the same time Lord William Bentinck received the most precise instructions from the Directors to pursue a policy of non-intervention with the native States generally, and to leave the chiefs to follow their own ways. The intentions of the Directors were good, and the principle of the new policy sound, but its application at that particular moment was premature. The native rulers had not been stimulated by our example and exhortations to renewed efforts to purify their administration, and when they found that the very slight check we exercised was to be relaxed they not unnaturally relapsed into their old ways. The application of the policy, rather than the policy itself, proved unfortunate, and entailed in most cases a more active intervention than would have been the case if it had never been withdrawn. But for this the responsibility did not rest with Lord William Bentinck, whose instructions were as precise and positive in this as they had been on the subject of batta.

The control which the East India Company established over the majority of the native States which was based on political and financial rather than administrative, was in no instance vigorously applied than in that of Haiderábád state ruled by the Nizam of the Deccan. From early period of our presence in Southern India militant nation, the Nizam of Haiderábád had our closely attached and almost constant ally. There had been one period of hesitation, when led away by hostile advisers and by the belief that an army disciplined by Frenchmen might be a match for one created by the English, he opposed us in arms, but the incident was a brief and passing one, and did

Muhammadan power of Mysore at another. The arrangement may be fairly represented as having been mutually advantageous. With the view of ensuring greater efficiency in the Nizam's service, British officers were introduced into it, and controlled the assessment of land and the collection of taxes during the life of Nizam Sikander Jah.

In May, 1829, Sikander Jah died and was succeeded by his son, Nazir-ud-Daulat. In writing to express his condolences on the death of the Nizam, Lord William Bentinck offered the new ruler his good wishes on 'assuming the sovereignty of Haidarábád,' and he also notified 'the intention of Government to revise the heretofore objectionable style of correspondence between the heads of the two Governments.' On July 21 Nazir-ud-Daulat wrote asking the Governor-General to order the discontinuance of the check and control exercised by British officers. One month later the Governor-General replied, granting this request and withdrawing his representatives, and in October the Nizam was left to carry out his sovereign<sup>1</sup> pleasure in his own way. Curiously enough the Nizam, having got rid of English officials, presented a request to the Governor-General to allow him to raise a personal body-guard of fifty English soldiers, but he was induced to withdraw his request. The administration of the finances of Haidarábád did

<sup>1</sup> It will be noted that the term 'sovereignty' was only used in corresponding with the Nizam among all the princes of India. He was treated more as an ally than a feudatory.

not improve when the Nizam was left to his own discretion and the advice of Chandu Lall—a minister who thought more of exhibiting the power and wealth of his master by a lavish and ostentatious expenditure than of the real interests of the people. In the official records there are frequent references to his ‘petty shifts and modes’ of raising revenue—a course which resulted after his death in the Indian Government taking over in the time of Lord Dalhousie the Berar districts and applying their revenue to the discharge of the Nizam’s obligations towards itself.

If the harmony of our relations with the largest of the native states was undisturbed, Lord William Bentinck had more cause for anxiety in regard to the affairs of two other states in Southern India, viz. Mysore and Coorg.

In Mysore the evil arose from maladministration. After the overthrow and death of Tipú Sultán at Seringapatam, we revived the former Hindu *régime* in the person of a descendant of the old Mahárájás, and we gave him as minister and adviser, Purnea, one of the ablest of Indian statesmen. When that minister retired in 1811 he left the government in a flourishing condition. The finances were on a sound basis, and the people were contented and happy. The new minister, Linga Ráj, had neither his ability nor his virtue. The exchequer was soon depleted, the people were burdened with taxation, and after twenty years of misgovernment they were ripe for revolt. The exhortations of the Resident, and a

personal visit by the Governor of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro, brought promises of amendment and postponed the day of reckoning. But the extortions of the tax-gatherers were resumed after a little time, and the people refusing to submit, broke out in open rebellion and killed several of the Mahārājā's officers. In the province of Nagar the rāyats rose *en masse*, and began what might be called a peasants' war.

The Mysore army, although drilled by English officers, was unable to crush the movement, and a strong force of Madras troops had to be sent against the insurgents. At the same time it was announced that their grievances would be considered in a lenient spirit if they desisted from opposition, and the presence of English officers established confidence in the good faith of this offer. The excesses of the Mahārājā had so completely alienated public confidence that no reliance was placed on the offers made on paper to grant the peasants what they justly demanded. The people remained under arms, and although no fighting actually took place, it was evident that the only way to put an end to the disorders was to incorporate Mysore for a time with the British dominion. The Mahārājā was deposed under clauses in the treaty of 1799, and assigned a place of residence and a pension. An English Commissioner assumed the control of the administration, and in the course of a little time tranquillity and prosperity returned to the province. Mysore continued to enjoy the advantages of English administration



down to 1881, when the descendant of the deposed Mahárájá was reinstalled, and is the present ruler of that province.

The second state with which interference became necessary was Coorg. The Rájá, whose excesses could only be explained on the supposition that he was out of his mind, refused to hold any relations with us whatever, and plotted to our disadvantage in Mysore and elsewhere. At last our patience was exhausted, and after a proclamation was issued declaring that 'the conduct of the Rájá had rendered him unworthy of the friendship and protection of the British Government,' war was declared against him. Lord William Bentinck, who happened to be staying at Utakamand at the time, assumed the personal direction of the campaign. His arrangements left no room for criticism on the ground of incompleteness or over-confidence. Four divisions were entrusted with the invasion of the difficult country of Coorg.

Although an ample force was employed in the operations, the invasion of Coorg was not attended with conspicuous military success, and it seemed likely to prove a very tedious business, when fortunately the Rájá, disheartened by the loss of his capital, surrendered himself a voluntary prisoner. He was deposed from power, assigned a residence at Benares and a pension, and Coorg, with the tacit acquiescence of the people themselves, as they at once desisted from hostility, became British territory.

The area of local disturbances covered the whole of India, but it was only in the two cases named that provinces had to be brought under direct British control. With the King of Delhi himself (who still retained the name of the Great Mogul) and with the ruler of Oudh there were constant bickerings and differences. The King of Delhi, who from being the patron had become the dependant of the Company, was dissatisfied with the amount of his allowance, and finding that there was no hope of obtaining what he wished from the authorities in India, he adopted as a possible remedy the unusual course of sending a special emissary to England, and he selected for this work Rammohun Roy, a Bráhmaṇ of great intelligence and attainments. The mission was abortive inasmuch as the English Government refused to recognise it, and the Governor-General was naturally irritated by a proceeding which seemed to aim at overriding his authority. The murder of Mr. Fraser, the Political Commissioner at Delhi, by a discontented chief, produced much excitement in that city, which was greatly increased when the criminal was brought to trial and hanged for his crime like an ordinary offender. These passages furnish evidence of the disorganised condition of affairs in the capital of Bábar's dynasty. The remembrance of departed power was always present to add bitterness to the existing financial embarrassment, and there is nothing surprising in the end having come two years later in the Mutiny.

At the other great Muhammadan capital of India, Lucknow, the state of affairs was still worse, and it was distinctly aggravated by the knowledge that, under the new policy, the Governor-General left the native rulers a free hand in appointing or getting rid of their ministers. The King of Oudh ruling during Lord William Bentinck's term of power had, as heir to the throne, been on terms of hostility with his father's minister, a man of considerable ability, known by his title of Motamid-ud-Daulat. On his father's death he pretended to sink his differences, and to take Motamid into his favour, but this was due rather to fear of the English Resident than to his own inclination. As soon as he realised that the Resident's hands were tied by his new instructions, he dismissed Motamid from office, and began a system of legal persecutions, which undoubtedly shortened the life of that official. The British Government, which had declared its fixed intention to stand aside, was insensibly drawn into the struggle, and the Resident refused to transact business with the incompetent and unworthy ministers by the aid of whom the King sought to carry on the administration. Against its own declared intentions, the Indian Government was thus drawn into controlling the King in his choice of a minister, and in the result the King was obliged to send for a former diwán and reinstate him in power.

The reforms set on foot by this minister, Mahdi Ali, arrested the downward descent of Oudh; but time was necessary for him to restore so thoroughly dis-

organised a State to anything approaching prosperity, and the King took pleasure in thwarting the best arrangements of his minister. The Resident reported that in his opinion there was no remedy for the evil but for us to assume the control of the State for a certain period. and Lord William Bentinck paid a special visit to Lucknow in 1831 to inform the King by word of mouth, and by a written despatch, that his territories must be better governed, or we should be compelled to annex them and depose him from power. Unfortunately we did not follow up this step by consistent action. For a brief space the King was impressed by the action of the Governor-General, but when Mahdi Ali appealed to the Resident for support it was refused on the plea of non-intervention, with the consequence that all his good intentions were never realised. At the same time that obedience was thus paid to the orders of the Directors, the Governor-General showed by his own action, and by the despatches he continually sent home recommending vigorous intervention in Oudh in the event of no amelioration taking place in its government, that the only remedy for maladministration in the native States was the vigilant supervision of the supreme authority, which his instructions forbade him to exercise. The vindication of Lord Dalhousie's annexion policy in 1856 would be found in the despatches of Lord William Bentinck in 1831 and 1832 on the subject of the internal condition of Oudh.

The gravest of all these minor disturbances occurred

in the Rájput state of Jaipur. In the time of Lord Amherst we had been compelled to intervene in the most energetic manner in the affairs of that state. The Indian Government not only appointed a permanent Resident, but banished an official named Jota Rám, who exercised a pernicious influence over the mother of the young Rájá. Although expelled from the state the influence of Jota Rám remained undiminished, and his faction formed the most powerful and energetic body in Jaipur. They spared no effort to discredit the minister who acted as Jota Rám's successor and to embarrass the British Resident. They succeeded so well in their machinations that the British Resident felt obliged to recommend the removal of the minister as the step most likely to restore tranquillity to Jaipur. For a time the Rání was content to carry on the government by means of some of his creatures; but encouraged by her success she at last demanded that Jota Rám should be allowed to return and resume his post. With this request the Government of India also thought it well to comply. The success of the Rání in her dealings with the English did not extend to her relations with the thákurs, or nobles of the State, who feigned no respect for a woman-regent, and who regarded Jota Rám as an adventurer.

The result of the conflict between the Rání and the thákurs was that the former was continued in the regency, but this arrangement was not concluded until Sir Charles Metcalfe threw the weight of his

personal influence into the scale in support of a pacific settlement. Much of the antipathy of the thákurs was due to the apprehension that the young Rájá had been made away with, and the production of the youthful ruler went far to allay the suspicions of his feudatories, and sufficed to procure for the Rání a bare majority of votes when the British Resident submitted to the nobles of Jaipur the question of her retaining the regency or not. Among the most pathetic incidents of English history in India is the sudden appearance of the Rájá—a child of eight years old, and the representative of a family whose origin is lost in antiquity—from behind the pardah, and his throwing himself, with touching confidence in the justice and sympathy of English authority, into the arms of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and begging there protection for himself and respect for his mother. To such an appeal there could only be one answer, and the conclave of nobles ratified the unexpressed wishes of the British representative.

Such was the position of affairs in Jaipur when Lord William Bentinck became Governor-General. It is not surprising to find that the new arrangement did not work satisfactorily, and that Jota Rám on his restoration to office behaved worse than he had done before. His one thought was to enrich himself as rapidly as possible at the expense of the peasant; but at the same time he did not conceal his animosity to those thákurs who had voted against the Rání, and he endeavoured to injure them in every way he could.

The guarantee of the British Government sufficed to preserve a hollow truce among the contending parties, but it was futile to pacify the unpaid soldiery, who had to be bribed into good-humour. The thákurs remained aloof and defiant, and the elevation of Jota Rám to the post of minister with the sanction of the British Government did not effect that improvement which was expected from this fresh accession of dignity.

Jota Rám was encouraged by his success to proceed to extremities against the thákurs. He curtailed their privileges, and attempted to substitute his own troops for theirs in the garrisoning of certain strongholds. This step provoked a civil war in 1830, and as the non-intervention theory was then in vogue the rival parties were left for a time to fight out their quarrel without our assistance or supervision. Such fighting as took place was of a desultory and uncertain character. It was only when Jota Rám menaced the territory of some of the thákurs whom we had guaranteed in their possessions that anything of a decisive nature took place. In face of the threat of a British force he was compelled to abandon the intention of appropriating the territory of some of the principal nobles. Baffled in this project he had recourse to other designs, in the midst of which, however, he lost the assistance of the Rání, who died in 1834. This event proved the beginning of more serious complications in Jaipur, for a few months later the young Rájá himself died, and it was strongly suspected from poison.

As may be imagined, this event greatly increased the indignation and excitement of the thákurs, who at once proceeded to Jaipur at the head of their armed retainers. Jota Rám offered to resign, and Major Alves, the Political Agent, was ordered to Jaipur to superintend the new arrangements necessary for the government of that state. It was quite clear that Jota Rám's offer was insincere, and that he would not resign his power without an effort to retain it; but the lengths to which he would go for the sake of ambition were only half suspected. His plot was marked by equal astuteness and audacity. He endeavoured to divert suspicion from himself at the same time that he had recourse to violent measures. By raising a popular disturbance on the very day of the Political Agent's arrival, and by hiring assassins to murder the English officers, he hoped to embroil the thákurs with the Government, and that he might be brought back to power through their being discredited.

The first part of his plot succeeded admirably. His emissaries raised a public disturbance; the assassins wounded the Agent, whose assistant, Mr. Blake, was killed by the mob, and in the midst of the disorder and alarm some thought that Jota Rám was the only person who could restore order. Unfortunately for him the assassin had been taken prisoner, and confessed that his instigators were Jain bankers, connected by blood and interest with Jota Rám. Jota Rám and his brother were arrested and



brought to trial. They were both sentenced to death, but this penalty was commuted to imprisonment for life in British territory. The affairs of Jaipur were finally adjusted by the Council of Regency for the new Rájá (who was a mere child) being placed under the protection of a British Resident stationed permanently at the capital. Thus ended in the full assertion of our power the long period of confusion which had disturbed the most important of the Rájput states during ten years, and it would have been better for it and for us if that step had been taken at a much earlier period.

Our relations with the other native states of India were not without their gratifying features. Among these may be cited the refusal of the Mahárájá of Patíála to accept interest on a loan of twenty lakhs which he had very opportunely made to us. The same chief also sold to us for another tract of territory the remainder of the district of Simla, which was then beginning to be regarded as the most convenient sanitarium in India, and the proper headquarters of the Government during the hot weather. Our connexion with the place which is now so famous in Anglo-Indian life was not very old in the time of Lord William Bentinck. A portion of the hill on which it stands was retained by us after the war with Nepál in 1815-6. An English officer erected the first residence (a thatched, wooden cottage) there in 1819, and three years later this building was converted into a substantial house. In 1826 a small

settlement had sprung up, to which the name of Simla was given, and in 1827 Lord Amherst was the first Governor-General to pay it a visit. In 1830 the remainder of the hill was obtained from the Mahārājā of Patialā in the manner described; and thenceforward, irregularly at first, but in the end with unfailing punctuality, the Government of India moved its headquarters to that pleasant resort on the slope of the Himālayas in the hot season of every year.

Simla was not the only hill sanitarium acquired during the time of Lord William Bentinck. One of his last acts was to purchase from the Rājā of Sikkim the site on which Dārjiling stands. After the war with the Gúrkhās in 1816 we restored that district, which they had seized, to the Rājā; and it was not until 1835 that we acquired by purchase the territory which was known until the other day as British Sikkim. Lord William Bentinck thus established the two best-known hill stations and sanitarium in Northern India.

One of the chief characteristics of Lord William Bentinck was his desire to see things for himself. Certainly no English ruler of India had visited so many parts of the peninsula. In the first six months of his Eastern residence he visited Burma, then recently annexed. Every summer saw him on tour, and when the accommodation of Simla was found to be insufficient for the requirements of a headquarter staff he proceeded to Utakamand, the sanitarium of

Madras. It was in some degree due to this habit of seeing things for himself that he obtained the reputation among Anglo-Indian officials, which finds expression in the pages of Shore, of being 'very suspicious and obstinate.' Indeed, all that somewhat acrid critic can find to say in his favour is that 'under Lord William Bentinck's administration the foundation of much solid improvement has been laid in India'—a grudging and unworthy summary of one of the most brilliant periods of reform in the history of the English in India.

Reference has been made to the fact that Lord William Bentinck found the Indian exchequer with a deficit of one million, and that he left it with a surplus of two millions. This was not the only financial difficulty with which he had to cope. Calcutta passed through a grave commercial crisis in the year 1833, when with hardly a sign of warning the five principal mercantile firms of that city failed. Their liabilities, which amounted to several millions, inflicted a most serious and much felt loss on the Company's servants who, attracted by a higher rate of interest, had deposited their savings with them. The cause of their downfall seems to have been their excessive expenditure, with a view of competing with the numerous rivals who appeared on the scene after the first withdrawal of the Company's commercial privileges. The effects of this keen competition were aggravated by the slow development of Indian trade, which did not increase in the manner expected, and

which was in the end only stimulated by the introduction of steam navigation. That event came too late to avert the crash which destroyed the merchant princes of Calcutta, and the Government was helpless to avert it, or thought more of itself profiting by the occasion. Its efforts to borrow money had never previously succeeded when offering less than five per cent., but Lord William Bentinck was quick to see the opportunity furnished by the discredit of the private firms, and brought out in 1834 a four per cent. loan, which was very readily taken up. The winding up of the affairs of the house of Palmer and Co., of Haidarábád, which had failed in the time of Lord Amherst, produced much litigation during the Governor-Generalship of Lord William, and constituted another commercial incident of importance which should be mentioned, although space is not available to enter into the details of an exceedingly intricate and delicate matter. It is curious to note that one portion of the business, that relating to the claims of the representatives of Sir William Rumbold, who was a partner in the firm, was only settled a short time ago by the considerate and generous action of the present reigning Nizam.

In October, 1833, Lord William Bentinck assumed the command of the army on the retirement of Sir Edward Barnes, and thus combined the functions of Commander-in-Chief and Governor-General. This union of the highest civil and military posts had occurred on two previous occasions, in 1786 when the

Marquis Cornwallis held both offices, and again in 1813 in the person of the Marquis of Hastings.

Mention should not be omitted of Lord William Bentinck's 'magnificent hospitality,' to use the words of Mr. Greville. He was the first English ruler to entertain on a large scale, and under his auspices the breakfasts and receptions at Government House became a recognised function for simplifying the task of administration and for establishing social relations between natives and Europeans. In this portion of his duties he was greatly assisted by his wife, whom Sir Charles Metcalfe described as 'a most engaging woman,' and whose charities were famous during her stay in India, and much missed after her departure. The best description of her character and virtues is that given by Mr. Greville after her death in May, 1843. It should be read for the light it throws on the character of one who was most nearly associated with Lord William Bentinck in his public career of forty years, but about whom the records of Government are unavoidably silent.

## CHAPTER VIII

### EDUCATION

OF all the acts associated with the administration of Lord William Bentinck there was none more important or of greater consequence than the new education policy inaugurated in 1834, which was based on the establishment of English as the official language of the country. This policy was an innovation, and was regarded by some of the most experienced men in India as full of danger. The East India Company respected the language as well as the religion and customs of the people, and the Orientalist school predicted innumerable evils and misfortunes from any attempt to interfere with it. To introduce English into the schools and to make it the vehicle of knowledge was represented as destructive of the national learning, and to substitute the tongue of the European conqueror for Persian in the courts of law as certain to be followed by unpopularity, if not absolute animosity. In support of these views were to be found such venerable names as the Prinseps; but they were too far-fetched to carry the weight to which those who held them were entitled

by their linguistic attainments and sympathy with the natives of India. The English school, as it was termed, was composed of younger men, and represented the more practical side of Indian administration. The late Sir Charles Trevelyan and Mr. Russell Colvin, who was Governor of the North-West Provinces in the first days of the Mutiny, were its principal leading men. Sir Charles Metcalfe and others of the leaders, and of the day supported them.

It may be doubted how the contest would have resulted between these two opposing parties but for the efforts and genius of Macaulay. The Charter Act of 1833 provided for the appointment of an additional or Law-member to the Council of the Governor-General, and the post was offered to Mr. Macaulay, who had shown himself the ablest supporter of the India Bill in the House of Commons. He arrived in India before the end of the year, and he at once took a controlling part in the discussion of all matters relating to education and legal reform. It happened that at the moment of his arrival the subject of education was a burning topic on account of the difference of opinion prevailing in the General Committee of Public Instruction. The question in dispute was as to the principles on which the Government subsidies should be allotted to the different colleges that had been established by English initiative since Warren Hastings founded the first of them—the Calcutta College—in the year 1781. The main principle at stake was the

question of the language in which instruction should be given, and the difference between the opposing parties has been summed up thus:—

‘Half of the Committee called the “Orientalists” were for the continuation of the old system of stipends tenable for twelve or fifteen years, to students of Arabic and Sanskrit, and for liberal expenditure on the publication of works in these languages. The other half, called the “Anglicists,” desired to reduce the expenditure on stipends held by “lazy and stupid schoolboys of 30 and 35 years of age,” and to cut down the sums lavished on Sanskrit and Arabic printing. At this juncture, Government requested the Committee to prepare a scheme of instruction for a college at Agra. The Committee were utterly unable to agree on any plan. Five members were in favour of Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit learning, and five in favour of English and the vernacular, with just so much of the Oriental learned languages as would be necessary to satisfy local prejudices.’

Macaulay on arriving in India was appointed President of this Committee, but he refused to act as such until the Governor-General had decided upon the language of instruction. In his capacity of Legislative member of Council, however, he was neither diffident nor inactive, and when the question was brought before Council by the rival parties, who addressed their arguments in the form of letters, dated 21st and 22nd January, 1835, respectively, he expressed his views on the matter in dispute in a masterly minute, dated 2nd February of that year, and from which we must quote the following paragraphs, as it is impossible to describe the points in dispute in clearer or more expressive language:—



‘It does not appear to me that the Act of Parliament can by any art of construction be made to bear the meaning which has been assigned to it. It contains nothing about the particular languages or sciences which are to be studied. . . . It is argued, or rather taken for granted, that by literature the Parliament can have meant only Arabic and Sanscrit literature, that they never would have given the honourable appellation of “a learned native” to a native who was familiar with the poetry of Milton, the metaphysics of Locke, and the physics of Newton; but that they meant to designate by that name only such persons as might have studied in the sacred books of the Hindus all the uses of kusa-grass and all the mysteries of absorption into the Deity. This does not appear to be a very satisfactory interpretation. To take a parallel case; suppose that the Pasha of Egypt, a country once superior in knowledge to the nations of Europe but now sunk far below them, were to appropriate a sum for the purpose of “reviving and promoting literature and encouraging learned natives of Egypt,” would anybody infer that he meant the youth of his Pashalic to give years to the study of hieroglyphics, to search into all the doctrines disguised under the fable of Osiris, and to ascertain with all possible accuracy the ritual with which cats and onions were anciently adored? Would he be justly charged with inconsistency, if instead of employing his young subjects in deciphering obelisks he were to order them to be instructed in the English and French languages, and in all the sciences to which those languages are the chief keys? . . .

‘The admirers of the Oriental system of education have used another argument which, if we admit it to be valid, is decisive against all change. They conceive that the public faith is pledged to the present system, and that to alter the appropriation of any of the funds which have hitherto been spent in encouraging the study of Arabic and Sanskrit would be downright spoliation. It is not easy to understand by

what process of reasoning they can have arrived at this conclusion. The grants which are made from the public purse for the encouragement of literature differ in no respect from the grants which are made from the same purse for other objects of real or supposed utility. We found a sanatorium on a spot which we suppose to be healthy. Do we thereby pledge ourselves to keep a sanatorium there if the result should not answer our expectations? We commence the erection of a pier. Is it a violation of the public faith to stop the works if we afterwards see reason to believe that the building will be useless? The rights of property are undoubtedly sacred. But nothing endangers those rights so much as the practice now unhappily too common of attributing them to things to which they do not belong. . . .

‘All parties seem to be agreed on one point, that the dialects commonly spoken among the natives of this part of India contain neither literary nor scientific information, and are moreover so poor and rude that until they are enriched from some other quarter it will not be easy to translate any valuable work into them. It seems to be admitted on all sides that the intellectual improvement of those classes of the people who have the means of pursuing higher studies can at present be effected only by means of some language not vernacular amongst them. What then shall that language be? One half of the Committee maintain that it should be the English. The other half strongly recommend the Arabic and Sanskrit. The whole question seems to me to be which language is the best worth knowing? I have no knowledge of either Sanscrit or Arabic. But I have done what I could to form a correct estimate of their value. I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I am quite ready to take the Oriental learning at the valuation of the Orientalists themselves. I have never

found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia. The intrinsic superiority of the Western literature is indeed fully admitted by those members of the Committee who support the Oriental plan of education. It will hardly be disputed, I suppose, that the department of literature in which the Eastern writers stand highest is poetry. And I certainly never met with any Orientalist who ventured to maintain that the Arabic and Sanskrit poetry could be compared to that of the great European nations. But when we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded and general principles investigated the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable. It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say that all the historical information which has been collected from all the books written in the Sanskrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical or moral philosophy the relative position of the two nations is nearly the same.

‘How then stands the case? We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of imagination not inferior to the noblest which Greece has bequeathed to us; with models of every species of eloquence; with historical compositions which considered merely as narratives have seldom been surpassed, and which considered as vehicles of ethical and political instruction have never been equalled; with just and lively representations of human life and human nature; with the most profound speculation on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, and trade; with full and correct information respecting every experi-

mental science which tends to preserve the health, to increase the comfort, or to expand the intellect of man. Whoever knows that language has ready access to all the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations of the earth have created and hoarded in the course of ninety generations. It may safely be said that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which 300 years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together. Nor is this all. In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Australasia; communities which are every year becoming more important and more closely connected with our Indian Empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature or at the particular situation of this country we shall see the strongest reason to think that of all foreign tongues the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects.

‘The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which by universal confession there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own; whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which by universal confession whenever they differ from those of Europe differ for the worse; and whether, when we can patronise sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance at the public expense medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding-school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns 30,000 years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter. . . . The languages of

Western Europe civilised Russia. I cannot doubt that they will do for the Hindu what they have done for the Tartar. . . .

‘The fact that the Hindu law is to be learned chiefly from Sanskrit books and the Muhammadan law from Arabic books has been much insisted on, but seems not to bear at all on the question. We are commanded by Parliament to ascertain and digest the laws of India. The assistance of a Law Commission has been given to us for that purpose. As soon as the code is promulgated the Shasters and the Hedaya will be useless to a Múnsif or Sadr Amín. I hope and trust that before the boys who are now entering at the Madrasa and the Sanskrit College have completed their studies this great work will be finished. It would be manifestly absurd to educate the rising generation with a view to a state of things which we mean to alter before they reach manhood.

‘But there is yet another argument which seems even more untenable. It is said that the Sanskrit and Arabic are the languages in which the sacred books of a hundred millions of people are written, and that they are on that account entitled to peculiar encouragement. Assuredly it is the duty of the British Government in India to be not only tolerant but neutral on all religious questions. But to encourage the study of a literature admitted to be of small intrinsic value, only because that literature inculcates the most serious errors on the most important subjects, is a course hardly reconcilable with reason, with morality, or even with that very neutrality which ought, as we all agree, to be sacredly pursued. It is confessed that a language is barren of useful knowledge. We are to teach it because it is fruitful of monstrous superstitions. We are to teach false history, false astronomy, false medicine, because we find them in company with a false religion. We abstain, and I trust shall always abstain, from giving any public encouragement to those who are engaged in the work of converting natives to Christianity. And while we act thus can we reasonably and decently bribe

men out of the revenues of the state to waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass, or what text of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat? . . .

‘To sum up what I have said. I think it clear that we are not fettered by any pledge expressed or implied; that we are free to employ our funds as we choose; that we ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing; that English is better worth knowing than Sanskrit or Arabic; that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic; that neither as the languages of law nor as the languages of religion have the Sanskrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our encouragement; that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed.’

The arguments recorded in this masterly Minute are unanswerable, and leave little or nothing further to be said on the subject of making the English language the vehicle of instruction in India, but the deliberate opinion of a practical Anglo-Indian administrator like Sir Charles Metcalfe must increase the weight attaching to the logic and acumen displayed in Macaulay’s exposition of the question. And Metcalfe wrote the following plain words on the subject:—‘The English language seems to me to be the channel through which we are most likely to convey improvement to the natives of India.’

Before Macaulay arrived in India, Lord William Bentinck had shown that his sympathies were in favour of English education. Among other acts

pointing to this conclusion may be cited his invitation to Krishen Rao, head master of the school at Sagar, to visit Calcutta at his own personal expense, so that he might become better acquainted with European ways and civilisation. In such visits and personal contact he saw the best means of opening the minds of natives to the benefits of education. Full expression was given to these views in the celebrated Resolution of March 7, 1835, which finally decreed that English should be the official language of India.

The Orientalists prided themselves on being the better friends of the Indians, and they considered that the blow dealt to their classical languages would cramp the political future and injure the interests of the natives. Experience has refuted these opinions, if indeed they were ever tenable. There can be no doubt that the students of Sanskrit and Arabic would never have been admitted to the same share with ourselves in the government of India that they now possess as fluent masters of the English language. The Orientalists were in reality the enemies of the Hindu race, and the English reformers, headed by Lord William Bentinck, Macaulay, and Metcalfe, its true friends. The latter were right not only in principle, but in anticipating that the natives would master our language with ease, and become as fluent in it as the subject Gauls and Africans became in the Imperial language of Rome. Even if the result had furnished a less complete vindication of their views it would still have been impossible to arraign





occasion of the final renewal of the East India Company's Charter, it appeared that the clause in the Act of 1833 relating to the admission of natives to higher appointments was inserted at the instance of Lord William Bentinck, who never ceased to recommend its adoption, and with this positive statement before us it will be readily understood how determined Lord William Bentinck was to make English the basis of education in India. If the education resolution had not been carried into effect the clause in the Charter Act on the subject of the employment of natives would have been a dead letter, and it would have been impossible for Sir Charles Trevelyan to have placed on record in his evidence before the Select Committee of 1853 this important opinion :—

‘To Lord William Bentinck belongs the great praise of having placed our dominion in India on its proper foundation in the recognition of the great principle that India is to be governed for the benefit of the Indians, and that the advantages which we derive from it should only be such as are incidental to, and inferential from, that course of proceeding.’

If English had not been adopted there would have been no possibility of the admission of natives of India to the higher branches of the service, in which they have since shown conspicuous ability, and reduced the cost of government. The advocacy of the only possible common language formed part of the policy of education and enlightenment which is rightly associated with the name of Lord William



which was not too common in the England of his day. His true sentiments seem to have been expressed when he said that 'he knew of no subject which the Press might not fairly discuss.' The somewhat different line that he took in connexion with the Batta case, when the final orders of the Court were given, was to be explained by the special circumstances of the time. The feelings of the military officers of the Company were very excited at the proposed reduction of their most cherished perquisite, and it was absolutely necessary after a very free discussion of the question during several years to peremptorily close it, when it had been decided beyond possibility of dispute that Batta should be reduced. It was in special relation to this matter and not as a general principle that Lord William Bentinck wrote the sentence which has furnished his enemies with a charge of inconsistency, that 'it is necessary in my opinion for the public safety that the Press in India should be kept under the most rigid control.' With regard even to the question as to whether officials should be allowed to contribute to the newspapers he was disposed to take a lenient view and to give them considerable latitude, always provided that they did not make use of official information to criticise the acts of their immediate superiors.

In the three great questions which were really dependent on the selection of English as the language to be used by the Government and its agents, Lord William Bentinck took a prominent and active part

on the side of native progress. Those questions were the admission of natives to the higher grades of the public service, the dissemination of modern culture among the upper classes of the natives with a view to their admission on terms of friendship into European society, and, thirdly, the emancipation of the Press for the purpose of creating and strengthening a healthy public opinion. It is impossible to measure the magnitude of the service conferred on the Indian peoples by Lord William Bentinck in all these matters. The most severe criticism that can be levelled at his proceedings is not that he was wrong in his policy, or that the principles upon which it was based were untenable, but that he was putting them in practice somewhat before the time was ripe. The financial position of the Indian Government, with its annual deficit and growing responsibilities, forbade the postponement of the admission of natives of India into the public service. It was absolutely indispensable to employ the only men who could work for a reasonable payment, and who moreover possessed a perfect knowledge of the character and customs of the governed. A persistence in keeping the administration of India as an exclusive monopoly for the nominees of the East India Company would have ended in bankruptcy. In the major part of his reform Lord William Bentinck therefore did not act too soon. He opened the gates of the public service partly because he saw that it was a mistaken and impossible policy to exclude the natives of India from a fuller

share in the government of the country, and partly because it was necessary to reduce the expenses of government. Both English and native interests were benefited in the long run, and the service to his own country was not less real though less apparent than that rendered to the natives of India. This policy explains and justifies the passage with which Macaulay closes his brilliant essay on Lord Clive when he speaks of 'the veneration with which the latest generation of Hindus will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck.'

## CHAPTER IX

### EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ALTHOUGH the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck was essentially peaceful, and its main interest centred in domestic and administrative reforms, it must not be supposed that external affairs presented no features of importance, or that during his tenure of power the foreign policy of India became practically a dead letter. If there was no foreign war, and if tranquillity was maintained on the frontiers, there were still negotiations that exercised a considerable influence on the policy of India and her neighbours in future years, and during the whole of his stay in the country the course of events west of the Indus was carefully watched, and what the best policy would be in certain eventualities formed a subject of constant discussion in official circles. It may seem strange, but it is none the less a fact, that Anglo-Indians were then divided into schools of forward and stationary policies quite as much as now, and that the possibility of a Russian invasion of India was discussed as freely as it has been since. While some ardent spirits advocated the

annexation of the Punjab and Sind, and wished to have commercial agents at Kábul, Herát, and even Bokhara, others deprecated any advance beyond the Sutlej, and would have left the custody of the Indus (which Akbar called the ditch of Delhi) to the Sikhs. The important Minute with which this chapter is closed shows that Lord William Bentinck was deeply interested in all these questions, and that he had a definite opinion as to how they should be treated.

The most important branch of the foreign policy of the Government of India in Lord William Bentinck's time was unquestionably the relations to be maintained with Ranjít Singh, the powerful ruler of the Sikhs. Those relations had subsisted for more than twenty years when he assumed charge of the government, but the increasing interest in Afghánistán, owing to the prolonged uncertainty as to whether the sovereign power in that state would finally fall to Dost Muhammad or Shuja ul Mulk, rendered them of special interest during the last three years of Lord William's stay in India. In 1805 Ranjít Singh was merely one of the chiefs of the Punjab, but three years later he had become generally known as the Mahárájá. When the Indian Government, alarmed by Napoleon's schemes in Persia for the invasion of India, sent in 1808 envoys to Kábul and Teherán, it also resolved to depute an officer to the camp of Ranjít Singh with the view of negotiating a defensive alliance and concerting measures for the

protection of the Punjab and British India. Mr. Metcalfe, then a young man, was entrusted with this mission, and executed it with exceptional tact and ability. But, strange to say, Ranjít Singh, of all the potentates we approached, was the only one indisposed to play a friendly part.

Our agent declared that 'our propositions were met by the most striking display of jealousy, distrust, and suspicion,' and that Ranjít Singh thought only of turning the presence of the British mission in his camp to advantage for his own personal ends. His main object was to incorporate in his dominion the Sikh states lying between the Sutlej and the Jumna. but as soon as the Indian Government realised his intentions it forbade his intervention in that quarter by taking the states of Patiála and its neighbours under its own special protection. Although Ranjít Singh resorted to every device within the scope of diplomacy to attain his object, he yielded with a good grace when he found that we were in earnest, and that he could only carry out his policy by appealing to a force which he did not possess. For twenty years after the mission referred to Ranjít Singh preserved a friendly, if vigilant, policy towards us, and if Mr. Metcalfe failed in the immediate object of his mission, he was so far successful that he provided the basis of a more cordial understanding.

Immediately after the arrival of Lord William Bentinck one of those frontier disputes which cannot be avoided between neighbouring states arose in



connexion with Wadwan, but its satisfactory arrangement showed that the Punjab ruler knew how to gracefully retreat when he could not carry his point. This incident sinks into insignificance beside the more important matters that arose out of the attempts of the Duráni exile, Sháh Shuja ul Mulk, to recover the Afghán throne by the aid of Ranjít Singh and the British Government. In June, 1829, he wrote acquainting the Indian Government with his proposed alliance with Ranjít Singh for the recovery of Kábul, and it so happened that the receipt of this letter coincided with instructions from home to acquire the control of trade on the river Indus. Although we did not then comply with his request, he was not discouraged from his undertaking by the British Government, which provided for him and his family a liberal pension. The first step taken by Lord William Bentinck towards carrying out his instructions was to commence negotiations with the Amirs of Sind for opening the Indus to Indian commerce. The negotiations took some time, but at last a treaty was signed in April, 1832, and a subsequent convention was concluded in December, 1834. At the same time that it negotiated with the power which held the approach to the Indus from the sea, the Indian Government made friendly overtures to Ranjít Singh, whose attitude had become more conciliatory to us. A special mission under the charge of Alexander Burnes, who was entrusted with a letter from William IV and a present of English horses

to the Mahárájá, was sent to Lahore in July, 1831, and in the following October Lord William Bentinck had a personal interview with Ranjít Singh at Rúpar on the Sutlej. This meeting was of a strictly ceremonious character—the Mahárájá being accompanied by 16,000 picked troops, and the Governor-General's escort consisting of a chosen force of English and native regiments.

The commercial treaty was not signed by Ránjít Singh until December, 1832, but that the Rúpar interview was not devoid of political importance was shown by the increased and more open support extended by the Sikh Mahárájá to the projects of Shuja ul Mulk after its occurrence. It is very unlikely that this astute ruler would have shown his hand so freely if he had not felt sure of our acquiescence and moral support. The result of Lord William Bentinck's diplomacy with the Lion of the Punjab was a great increase in Ranjít's friendliness to us, and the establishment of that understanding which resulted in the alliance a few years later against Afghánistán, and which held good through all the troubles at Kábul ten years afterwards. There is no necessity here to challenge or uphold the wisdom of that policy. It is enough to record Lord William Bentinck's marked success in coming to a satisfactory understanding with Ranjít Singh, who at an earlier period of his career had been hostile and even defiant.

But something must be briefly said on the subject

of Sháh Shuja's first attempt with Indian resources to reconquer Afghanistan. Equipped with a considerable sum of money by Ranjít Singh, he left Ludhiána at the head of a few hundred men. By the time he reached Shikárpur on the Indus his following had swelled to an army 30,000 strong, but there had also commenced the misfortunes of this ill-starred expedition.

The Amirs of Sind, imitating the example of Ranjít Singh, had promised him supplies and money, but alarmed at the largeness of the Afghán force they requested Sháh Shuja to hasten his departure from their territory. This did not suit his plans or convenience, and the allies of one day became the bitter opponents of the next. They even resorted to arms, and in a sanguinary battle fought at Rori on the Indus, in January, 1834, the Sind forces suffered a complete overthrow. This battle settled the difficulty, for the Amirs paid up all, and more than all, they had promised, and Sháh Shuja hastened on to Kandahár. The condition of Afghánistán then was as a house divided against itself. There was no central authority and no single chief. The able Dost Muhammad ruled in Kábul, and his brothers held possession of the different provinces. But there was no union even against Shuja ul Mulk, and when Dost Muhammad's request for an alliance (made to the English Government in May, 1833) was rejected, it looked as if the Bárakzáis could not make any head against Sháh Shuja, and the first events of the campaign bore out this assumption. The Kandahár forces were over-

thrown, and close siege was laid to the town, which was on the eve of surrendering when Dost Muhammad arrived at the head of a relieving army. A pitched battle was fought near Kandahár, and the result hung for some time in the balance. Had the whole army fought with the intrepidity of two Hindustáni regiments led by an English officer named Campbell the result must have been favourable to Sháh Shuja, but his Afghán followers had, even in the short space that had elapsed since they left Ludhiána, been alienated by his faults, and they deserted him in the crisis of the battle. His own rashness and want of courage seem to have contributed to his overthrow. He fled the field on the dispersion of his forces, and after several adventures in Balúchistán and Sind he succeeded in regaining the safety of his old refuge at Ludhiána. The main objects of Lord William Bentinck's policy in this quarter were to convert the Indus into the ditch of British India, to associate the Sikhs and the Sind valley with us in its defence, and to create a friendly Afghánistán as a buffer-state between India and any possible invader.

Lord William Bentinck's attention was directed to the East as well as the West. He was specially interested in the future of Singapur, a position of commanding importance which we owe to the genius of Sir Stamford Raffles, who acquired what might become the Gibraltar of Asia by purchase in 1819. Strangely enough its importance was not realised until a comparatively recent period, and in April,

1830, and again in September, 1833, we find Lord William Bentinck inviting schemes to increase the population of both Singapur and Penang. In 1832 he transferred the capital of the Straits Settlements from Prince of Wales Island to Singapur. The introduction of steam and the growth of trade between India and Australasia have altered all this, and the future prosperity of Singapur may now be deemed assured, but Lord William Bentinck is entitled to all the credit of having realised this when most people were sceptical as to the value of the position.

There was another matter not immediately connected with any place or country, but bearing generally on the external relations of India, in which Lord William Bentinck took a lively concern, and that was the establishment of steam communication between India and England. He encouraged every scheme calculated to promote this object, and it was largely due to his initiation and efforts that success was attained at such an early stage of the question. The receipt of news from Europe by some more rapid conveyance than a sailing ship had long been an object of prime importance with the East India Company, and during the wars with France many schemes had been tried for this purpose. The agents of the Company and the British Consuls at Bussora, Aleppo, and in Egypt were actively employed in the transmission of despatches to India, sometimes by the Euphrates and the Persian Gulf, and sometimes by the Red Sea. Before Lord William Bentinck reached India the

first experiment had also been made in steam navigation between the two countries. A small vessel named 'The Enterprise' sailed in 1825 from England to India, partly by steam and partly by sailing, in less than four months; but as considerable disappointment was felt at the time taken, no further experiment was attempted for a few years.

In the meantime another question demanded a prompt answer—as to the rival claims of the Cape and overland routes. Between the merits of these routes Lord William Bentinck was called upon to decide, and in August, 1830, he gave his unqualified decision in favour of the Red Sea route over that by the Cape for the despatch of letters and news. He was, no doubt, induced to form this conclusion by the successful journey of the 'Hugh Lindsay' steamer, which steamed from Bombay to Suez in one month—a time that was subsequently reduced to twenty-two days. The Indian Government then hastened to purchase the necessary steamers to keep up communications by this route, and Mr. Waghorn, who had strenuously advocated its advantages, and whose name is generally associated with the origin of this route, was rewarded with the command of one of them. Lord William Bentinck returned to the subject in a minute dated 12 June, 1832, on the question of establishing steam communication between Egypt and England in connexion with that already in progress by the Red Sea from Egypt to India. But his opinion on the subject was given in its most interesting form

before a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1837. He said:—

‘It is through the means of a quite safe and frequent communication between all India and England that the natives of India in person will be enabled to bring their complaints and grievances before the authorities and the country; that large numbers of disinterested travellers will have it in their power to report to their country at home the nature and circumstances of this distant portion of the Empire. This result I hope will be to rouse the shameful apathy and indifference of Great Britain to the concerns of India; and by thus bringing the eye of the British public to bear upon India it may be hoped that the desired amelioration may be accomplished.’

Reference has been made in the earlier paragraphs of this chapter to the motives which led to the treaties with Ranjît Singh and the Amirs of Sind, and to the encouragement of the Afghán exile, Shuja ul Mulk. It was in Lord William Bentinck’s time that the possibility of a Russian invasion of India was fairly faced and discussed, and his parting legacy to the Government of India was a masterly minute in which he reviewed the military position of the country and considered the question of an attack by a Russian army associated with an irregular force of Central Asian and Afghán adventurers. As we had only gained India after a struggle with our old European rivals, the French, it was natural for us to contemplate the possibility of another European invasion of India, and during the earlier years of this century the

ambitious schemes of Napoleon kept us constantly on the alert. In 1830 fear of France in India at all events had disappeared, but in its place had arisen a keen and not ill-founded apprehension that Russia might prove a more formidable and persistent adversary. This sentiment led to two inquiries: first, what was the strength of the position we held in India; and secondly, what were our resources for meeting an invader; and they are exhaustively considered in the minute already referred to. But before quoting Lord William Bentinck's opinion some evidence of the prevalent feeling among Anglo-Indian officials may be given, and this cannot be furnished in a better form or with greater authority than by using the words of Sir Charles Metcalfe:—

‘Some say that our Empire in India rests on opinion, others on main force. It in fact depends on both. We could not keep the country by opinion if we had not a considerable force, and no force that we could pay would be sufficient if it were not aided by the opinion of our invincibility. Our force does not operate so much by its actual strength as by the impression which it produces, and that impression is the opinion by which we hold India.’

Commenting on Lord William Bentinck's minute Sir Charles wrote:—

‘He admits that we have no hold on the affections of our subjects; that our native army is taken from a disaffected population; that our European soldiery are too few to be of much avail against any extensive plan of insurrection. This is quite enough and more than I have hitherto alluded to, for it is impossible to contemplate the possibility of dis-



affection in our army without seeing at once the full force of our danger. As long as our native army is faithful, and we can pay enough for it, we can keep India in order by its instrumentality, but if the instrument should turn against us where would be the British power? Echo answers, where? It is impossible to support a sufficient army of Europeans to take the place of our native army. The late Governor-General appears also to adopt in some measure the just remark of Sir John Malcolm that 'in an Empire like that of India we are always in danger, and it is impossible to conjecture the form in which it may approach.' This sentiment expresses the reality of the case in perhaps the truest manner.'

On another occasion, speaking of 'the instability of our Indian Empire,' he said, 'we were sitting on a barrel of gunpowder in India which might explode at any moment.' With regard to a possible Russian invasion Sir Charles was in favour of waiting on events, and keeping the military expenditure strictly within the limits of our financial resources. He was in favour of every increase being made in the European garrison of India that could be borne by the revenues of that country, and of deferring exceptional measures until the danger had become more tangible and nearer. What is surprising is that with this clear perception in the highest quarters of the insecurity of our position in India in 1835, there should have been such rash over-confidence in 1857, when it was relatively weaker, and 'the native army taken from a disaffected population' constituted more than ever the basis of our power.

Sixty years ago the possibility of a Russian invasion of India was exceedingly remote, and so many difficulties remained to be overcome, and such was the extent of the intervening distance, that ordinary men might be excused for deeming such a project chimerical. Yet practical and far-seeing statesmen like Lord William Bentinck and Sir Charles Metcalfe not merely discussed the extent and probable date of the arrival of the danger, but laid down the best mode of dealing with it. Sir Charles Metcalfe, who was opposed to even commercial missions to Kábul, and who was the first to prominently advocate the doctrines of 'masterly inactivity,' was content to leave the result to the natural course of events—being of opinion that the Indian garrison could render a good account of any Russian force likely to reach the frontier. On the other hand, Lord William Bentinck, whose policy was of a more vigorous description, drew up the following minute on the whole aspect of our position in India, and although the facts are altered and events have produced many changes, its value is still very considerable, and its historical interest is quite unimpeachable.

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MINUTE BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER-  
IN-CHIEF, MARCH 13TH, 1835.

Before I proceed to describe what the constitution of the army is, and to offer an opinion as to what it ought to be, a preliminary enquiry seems to be necessary as to the specific dangers by which our dominion may be assailed. It is easy

supplied Paskewitch with 30,000 men. It may therefore be assumed that the same army could assist Persia with an equal number as an auxiliary force. With a good understanding between the two Governments, with time for preparation, and with good management there could be no difficulty in transporting this force to Herát. The Russians are accustomed to move in countries similarly circumstanced. In Turkey the Russian army always carried with it two months' supply of grain and handmills for grinding it, but they never issue any part of this supply until all other means of obtaining it have failed.

What the policy of Russia might be after taking possession of Herát it is unnecessary now to consider, but it is impossible to deny that she might arrive at that point in legitimate support of her ally, the King of Persia, and it is equally difficult to deny that from that point she may proclaim a crusade against British India, in which she would be joined by all the warlike restless tribes that formed the overwhelming force of Timúr. The distances from Herát to Attock are:—

Herát to Kandahár. . . . .	560 miles.
Kandahár to Ghazni . . . . .	190
Ghazni to Kábul . . . . .	82
Kábul to Attock . . . . .	200
	<hr/>
	1032

The Afghán confederacy, even if cordially united, would have no means to resist the power of Russia and Persia. They probably would make a virtue of necessity and join the common cause, receiving in reward for their co-operation the promise of all the possessions that had been wrested from them by Ranjít Singh, and expecting also to reap no poor harvest from the plunder of India. But however this may be, it will be sufficient to assume the possibility that a Russian force of 20,000 men fully equipped, accompanied with a body of 100,000 horse, may reach the shores of the Indus, that

Ranjit Singh has no means to resist their advance, and that the invaders, having crossed the Indus into the Punjab, would find themselves in possession of the parts of India, the most fertile of resources in every kind, and secure on every side from being harassed and attacked even if they had not on their side a body of irregular cavalry much more numerous and efficient than any we have to oppose to them.

I shall assume, then, that the attack against which we have to provide is to consist of the above-mentioned force. I shall now proceed to inquire into the composition of the army of India, of the physical and moral qualities of the native armies of the different Presidencies, and of the adequacy and efficiency of the present proportion of our European force to our security and defence against all dangers.

In the margin<sup>1</sup> is inserted an abstract of the rank and file of all descriptions in the native armies of the three Presidencies—their height and weight, and the countries from whence they are recruited.

It appears from the annexed statements that the whole of

<sup>1</sup> RANK AND FILE OF THE THREE ARMIES.

<i>Regular Infantry.</i>		<i>Irregulars.</i>	
		<i>Infantry.</i>	
Bengal, 74 regiments .	50,320	Bengal, 10 regiments .	7504
Madras, 52     "     .	35,360	Bombay, 1     "     .	680
Bombay, 26     "     .	17,680		<hr/>
	<hr/>		8184
	103,360		<hr/>
<i>Regular Cavalry.</i>		<i>Cavalry.</i>	
Bengal, 10 regiments .	4440	Bengal, 4 regiments .	2526
Madras, 8     "     .	3552	Bombay, 1     "     .	832
Bombay, 3     "     .	1332		<hr/>
	<hr/>		3358
	9324		<hr/>
Total Regular Native Troops .		112,684	
Total Irregulars . . . . .		11,542	

the Bengal army, and one-half of that of Bombay, including all the cavalry, are Hindustánis. The Madras army is recruited principally from their own territories, and has only a small portion of Bengal men in their ranks. When at Utakamand all the Governments were requested to submit to a Military Committee the following question, 'Whether the order of the Court of Directors, issued about three years ago, restricting the recruiting of each of the three armies to the limits of its own Presidency, had operated beneficially; or whether it would be better to permit the Madras and Bombay armies to recruit as formerly in the Bengal territory?' the question did not apply to the Bengal army. The Madras Committee recommend that in the cavalry no alteration should be made, the men being chiefly Mussulmans from the Karnátik. The number of Hindus in each regiment amount to about fifty, which it is proposed to increase to an hundred. In the infantry they think that a proportion of Bengal men, about an hundred per regiment, might be introduced with advantage. In the Golundauze one-fourth of the whole are from the Bengal Provinces.

The Bombay Committee report that the Court's restrictive order has been totally inoperative, because, though the order

*Average of Heights and Weights.*

BENGAL INFANTRY.

	Height.		Weight.	
	ft.	in.	st.	lbs.
Recruited generally in the Upper Provinces of Bengal . . .	5	7.82	9	0.8

MADRAS INFANTRY.

Men formerly recruit boys . . .	5	6.36	7	9.73
Madrassis recruited . . .	5	6.34	8	1.10
Hindustanis recruited . . .	5	6.59	8	5.28

BOMBAY INFANTRY.

Men formerly recruit boys . . .	5	4.75	8	5.15
Konkanis recruited . . .	5	5.5	8	5.25
Deccanis „ . . .	5	5.5	8	9.25
Hindustanis „ . . .	5	6.3	9	0.5

had been so far obeyed that no recruiting parties had been sent to Bengal, yet the Bengal men having voluntarily presented themselves for enlistment, they had been engaged as before. The only change recommended by the Committee is that, for the purpose of getting a better description of men, recruiting parties shall, as before, be sent to Bengal<sup>1</sup>.

One of the members, Major Robertson, dissents from his colleagues. He prefers recruiting exclusively from the Bombay territories, with the exception of the cavalry and Golundanze, 'who, requiring a much larger description of men, must have recourse to Hindustan.'

From the preceding statements it appears that the Hindustáni is larger and more robust than the native south of the Narbadá, and the presumption must be that he is considered a more powerful if not a better soldier. His habits, indeed, are much more military, for not only, as appears above, does he go to seek service in Bombay, but the infantry in the service of the Rájá of Nágpur, as well as the Nizam's contingent, consist entirely of Hindustánis. In a late letter from the Resident of Haidarábád he mentions that one of the Arabs, or of the Horsemen from our Bengal Province of Rohilkhand, was equal to ten or twenty of the other men of the Nizam's force; and in the attempt recently made by Sháh Shuja to recover his territories, it was the battalion of Hindustánis and the Rohillas, under an officer of the name of Campbell, that was particularly distinguished.

I have not read without surprise the pretensions set forth in behalf of the Madras army. Sir Thomas Munro upon

<sup>1</sup> The following statement would seem to support the opinion that the Hindustánis engaged at Bombay are inferior in stature and character to those of the Bengal army:—

Infantry.	Height.		Cavalry, all Hindustánis.
	ft.	in.	
Bengal . . . .	5	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ <sup>5</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	Corporal Punishment,
Bombay . . . .	5	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	Bengal . . 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ % per cent.
			Bombay . . 42

A more severe discipline is supposed to prevail in the Be,

many occasions advocates their occupation of the whole of the Peninsula south of the Narbadá. I submit the following extracts from his correspondence (A.D. 1820):—

‘The Narbadá is unquestionably the proper boundary between Bengal and Madras, not only on account of its natural barrier formed by the river and the broad range of hills which accompany it, but of its being the line of separation between the Deccan and Hindustán, and between natives speaking different languages. The Bengal army, composed of men from Hindustán, dislike serving south of the Narbadá, and do not readily assimilate either with the natives of the country or with the Madras troops.’

I must presume that the Bombay army was at that time upon a very low establishment, and had no Hindustánis in its ranks. The dislike of the natives of Hindustán to serve south of the Narbadá has subsequently been proved to be entirely unfounded. The Government and army of Bombay are quite disregarded. Again (A.D. 1820):—

‘When Haidarábád and Nágpur were great foreign and independent states’ (and more likely to act against us than with us) ‘the immediate control of Bengal was right, more especially as it did not affect the authority of the Madras Government over its army, of which only two battalions were several years at Haidarábád, but both Haidarábád and Nágpur are as completely dependent upon us as Mysore. They must at some period or other fall entirely into our hands, and the internal administration must in the meantime be chiefly directed by our Resident. At present the discipline of our army is much injured by our having 20,000 men beyond our frontier removed in a great measure from our control<sup>1</sup>.’

Again (A. D. 1804):—

‘I am sorry to hear it reported that it had been in agitation to relieve the subsidiary force at Haidarábád with Bengal troops, I think there are many strong public grounds for having no Bengal troops either there or at Poona. It is easier to carry on war in all the countries south of the Narbadá from Mysore than from Bengal. Where troops are in all respects equal there is still an advantage in having those who are to act together drawn from one

<sup>1</sup> This will be in part obviated by the transfer of a General Officer from the ceded districts to Haidarábád.

and not from different establishments, but the local troops are perhaps in some respects superior to those of Bengal. They are more regular, more tractable, more patient under privations, and they have been more accustomed to military operations.<sup>1</sup>

These remarks are more applicable to 1804 than to 1835. There are no enemies to war against. The greater experience in military operations now rather belongs to the Bengal troops, and the preference assigned to the Madras sepoy for certain qualities would not now be as readily admitted.

I have quoted largely from Sir Thomas Munro because I consider his authority superior to all others, but allowance must be made in the present case for a spirit of partiality, if not of partizanship, which as a Madras officer it was natural for him to feel. But it is impossible for any dispassionate observer who has seen the Madras sepoys not to say that their physical defects and delicate frame, supposing all other qualities equal, render them very inferior to the Northern Hindustánis, and that consequently as a body of men they are inferior to either of the other armies. The regulated standard of each army is noted in the margin<sup>1</sup>.

I come next to the Bombay army, composed in equal proportions of Hindustánis and of men from their own proper territories. It would have been satisfactory if the Committee, who do not recommend any change in this divided com-

<sup>1</sup> BENGAL.

M.C., 8 August, 1796, Carrol's code, chap. ix, sec. 42. No sepoy is to be entertained who is not 5 ft. 5 in. high, or who is under 16 or above 30 years of age, unless in the latter case he shall have served before.

MADRAS.

The standard of the Madras army was raised in 1829 from 5 ft. 4 in. to 5 ft. 6 in. for Horse Artillery and Cavalry, and to 5 ft. 5 in. for Infantry of the line. Before 1829 the standard for all appears to have been 5 ft. 4 in.

BOMBAY.

The lowest standard for the Cavalry is 5 ft. 6 in., age 24 yrs. For Infantry 5 ft 3 in., age not above 22 yrs. For Grenadiers 5 ft. 6 in. and upwards.





ferred in complete regiments to the Bengal army, the Bombay half<sup>1</sup> to remain as a separate corps to be recruited always within the territories; to be commanded by a Major-General with the same staff as any other division of the army, and the commissariat and ordnance departments being incorporated with those of Bengal or Madras as may be convenient. I am of course supposing the previous adoption of the general equalisation of all allowances.

To the officers I conceive that the larger field of employment and the superior healthiness of many of the stations in the Upper Provinces would be agreeable. To the men it would be much more satisfactory to be brought nearer their homes, and to be saved the danger of the long journey which has been so fatal to many when returning on furlough. The State, besides the saving from the reduction of the staff, would make a great gain in the comparative cheapness of all camp establishments, of followers, &c. It is an extraordinary fact not yet accounted for that in all the stations occupied alternately by Madras, Bombay, and Bengal troops, the Bazaar prices have invariably fallen with the last and risen with the two former.

The Bombay division would under this alteration occupy only the stations within their frontier, transferring the southern Maráthá country to Madras, Nágpur<sup>2</sup> and Dísá to Bengal.

In considering the question of internal danger those officers most conversant with India affairs who were examined before the Parliamentary Committee apprehend no danger to our dominion as long as we are assured of the fidelity of our

<sup>1</sup> As this separate corps would be liable to degenerate into a sort of militia it might perhaps be a better arrangement to incorporate the Bombay half in the Madras army, in the same manner as the Hindustáni half would be drafted into that of Bengal.

<sup>2</sup> The following table of distances shows that Nágpur is as conveniently placed for support from three of the great military

native troops. To this opinion I entirely subscribe. But others again view in the native army itself the source of our greatest peril. In all ages the military body has been often the prime cause, but generally the instrument, of all revolutions; and proverbial almost as is the fidelity of the native soldier to the chief whom he serves, more especially when he is justly and kindly treated, still we cannot be blind to the fact that many of those ties which bind other armies to their allegiance are totally wanting in this. Here is no patriotism, no community of feeling as to religion or birthplace, no influencing attachment from high considerations, or great honours and rewards. Our native army also is extremely ignorant, capable of the strongest religious excitement, and very sensitive to disrespect to their persons or infringement of their customs.

I shall quote from the evidence a few of those passages bearing upon this subject which appear to me to have the greatest force and truth. Mr. Henry Russell observes:—

‘The greatest danger we have to apprehend is from our native army; our military force is the exclusive tenure by which we hold the government, and the fidelity of the troops of whom that force is composed is necessarily precarious. They are foreigners and mercenaries. They are attached to a Government that pays them well and treats them kindly, &c., but we have no hold upon them through either national honour or national prejudices, and cannot expect from them what we do from English soldiers fighting for English objects. They are peculiarly susceptible of being practised

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stations in Bengal as from Bombay, and much nearer to the divisions in Málwá and Ságár than even to Bombay:—

Nágpur to	Miles.	Nágpur to	Miles.
Bombay . . . .	560	Ságár (c) . . . .	181
Madras . . . .	735	Benares . . . .	446
Mhow (a) . . . .	351	Allahábád . . . .	450
Nímach (b) . . . .	505	Agra . . . .	669

(a) Left cantonment of the Rájputána force.

(b) Centre of the Rájputána force.

(c) Head-quarters of Ságár division.

upon, and may be induced either by our own mismanagement or by the artifices of designing persons to turn against us those very arms which now constitute our only strength.'

This intelligent officer makes a remark too true at the present day with respect to the Madras army :—

'The details of the army had for the first time in India fallen into the hands of a school which thought that everything depended on show, and that no sacrifice was too great for the attainment of outward smartness and uniformity.'

There are parts of Mr. Holt Mackenzie's evidence well worthy of attention, for no man of his time in India possessed the same general knowledge or could form a more accurate and enlightened judgment upon all subjects connected with our rule. He observes : 'I do not think the sepoys have any attachment to the English as a nation; on the contrary, I apprehend that a considerable number of that part which consists of Moslems must generally have a national, or rather I should say a religious, dislike to the English.' He thinks 'the sepoys have a great deal of attachment to their officers, but that this rests upon personal character rather than on anything that may be called attachment to the nation generally.' He thinks 'the sepoys, as long as they are well paid, will have so strong a sense of the duty of being faithful to those who so pay them as to be only overcome by some powerful cause of discontent or excitement.' He thinks a larger native army is quite essential for maintaining the tranquillity of the country, but he would be 'very sorry to see its defence entrusted to them without a large European force.' He is not aware of any circumstances causing immediate danger, but he thinks 'on general principles that there is much prospective danger.'

It is only since I recorded different minutes enforcing the precedence and expediency of bettering the condition of the native army and of preventing discontent by timely concession and precaution that I have read a passage in a letter from Sir Thomas Munro, written in 1817, in which I find a

view of our future situation and the consequences appertaining to it quite in unison with the sentiments I have so often expressed. He observes: 'But even if all India could be brought under the British dominion, it is very questionable whether such a change, either as it regards the natives or ourselves, ought to be desired. One effect of such a conquest would be that the Indian army, having no longer any warlike neighbours to control, would gradually lose its military habits and discipline, and that the native troops would have leisure to feel their own strength, and, for want of other employment, to turn it against their European masters.' He concludes a long and able argument upon the question whether in the event of our conquest of the whole of India the condition of the people would be better than under their native princes, which he doubts, with this remark: 'There is perhaps no example of any conquest in which the natives have been so completely excluded from all share in the government of their country as in British India.' The only conclusion that I wish to establish from the preceding remarks, which contain indisputable truths, is that in the native army alone rests our internal danger, and that this danger may involve our complete subversion. But the fidelity of our native army, though wonderfully great and deserving of high confidence, cannot be considered exempt from the possibility of seduction, and thus an adequate European force is the sole security against this, the greatest evil that could befall us. What should be the proportion of our European to our native force will be presently considered.

The external danger comes next under review. The capability of the native army to meet it, and the manner in which the native military means of India can be turned to the greatest advantage, are subjects of the first magnitude.

As far as experience can teach us, the prospect is discouraging as to any great degree of direct and positive

assistance in the field, that is in actual conflict, to be expected from the sepoy in a contest with the stronger and bolder races of Central Asia, with or without the co-operation of a Russian force. Mr. Holt Mackenzie has given an opinion upon the question before us, which quite coincides with my view of it:—

‘My impression is that as far as regards any Indian enemy the native army may be considered to be very efficient. I am not equally confident of this efficiency if placed in any new and unusual position and exposed to encounter enemies that may possibly come upon us from without. I think the result of the war with the Burmese seems to show that when brought against enemies superior in physical strength to those with whom they have been accustomed to contend, and required to surmount obstacles of a different kind from what they have been accustomed to surmount, the native troops, however well led, will be found to want resolution and nervous vigour so as to be inferior to European troops in a degree not ordinarily to be perceived in Indian warfare. Consequently I should apprehend that if they were called upon to meet an European enemy in the north of India they might fail partly from the want of physical strength and partly from the want of moral energy.’

The defects of the native of India are a want of physical strength and of moral energy. The first is beyond our remedy. It only depends upon ourselves to raise the latter to a much higher standard. Our system has, I fear, tended to depress it.

The late wars have brought the sepoy in contact with enemies of masculine character, and have shown the justice of the preceding opinion.

Sir David Ochterlony, in his confidential report to Government during the Nepál war, has recorded his opinion that the sepoys were unequal to contend with the Gúrkhas in the hills.

The Burmese war was exclusively carried on by British troops. The Madras troops entirely failed. It is understood that Sir Archibald Campbell was strongly prejudiced against them, and when granting the request of their officers to be



filled the office of Quartermaster-General when I was at Madras. The opinions on both these questions are worthy of being noticed.

‘The native troops are in an excellent state of discipline, but of course the Europeans are always superior to the natives. Question is, What should be the relative proportions of the European infantry to the native infantry? Answer: I should say one-third of European; that was the proportion observed at Madras,—indeed we have sometimes rather more, now we have considerably less.’

I once conversed with Sir Thomas Munro on that point, and he expressed his opinion very decidedly that there should be that proportion. This is also my own opinion, but I think that it would suffice at present to fix it at one-fourth, being careful that the establishment should be always kept complete, and that on the most remote indications of danger it should be increased to one-third.

The statements annexed to this Minute show the actual proportion of Europeans to natives in the army of each presidency, and in the whole army.

The raising the European proportion to one-fourth would require an establishment of 28,171 rank and file. The present establishment of King's troops consists of twenty regiments of infantry and four of cavalry. The numbers wanting to complete amount to 1945 rank and file, and the effective strength consists only of 15,527 rank and file. The three European regiments in the Company's service amount to 2429 rank and file. They exceed their complement. The total effective force, both King's and Company's, amounts to 18,016 rank and file, and the deficit required to complete the whole to one-fourth would be 10,155 rank and file, of which 2599 would be in excess of the present establishment, supposing the King's regiments to be complete and the Company's European corps reduced to their complement. In order to maintain the proportion of one-fourth in a state of efficiency, it is necessary to ~~maintain~~



to the very great difference there is, and must always be, between the apparent and the real force, that is between the number of men actually borne on the rolls, and those if the regiment took the field who would be forthcoming. Many from the effects of climate must be left behind in hospital and quarters.

I called on Dr. Burke, the Inspector-General of Hospitals, an officer of great experience and intelligence, for an opinion of the deductions that ought to be made on this score. His answer gives 8 per cent. for sick left behind and 4 per cent. more for the effects of even a long march on a very short service. In order to keep up this one-fourth to its proper quota I think the establishment of rank and file should be fixed at 25,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, and to effect it at the least possible charge I would raise each of our twenty-three regiments of infantry to 1000 rank and file, and add to our establishment two regiments of King's infantry. The cavalry, as I have already proposed in a former minute, should be raised to 800 rank and file, and the establishment augmented from three to five regiments, being 1000 men short of the force proposed.

I would station these two additional regiments of infantry and two of cavalry as follows—one of infantry at Bangalore, making three regiments at that station, which I consider as the most convenient position for a reserve, to be applicable to all exigencies in India; one regiment of infantry and one of cavalry to be placed in the great central cantonment, Rájputána, proposed to be established on the Beas river, and the other regiment of cavalry at Haiderábád.

In Rájputána there are above 10,000 native troops without any European force, which I consider to be highly objectionable in many points of view. This tract of country between the Narbadá and Jumna, or rather between Nágpur and Agra, is by far the most important in the whole line of our military occupation.

I do not feel called upon to suggest the means by which this extra expense shall be defrayed. My duty is performed in stating the imperfections of our present military defence and the measures that are necessary for the security of our empire. At the same time it appears to me that the reduction of one captain in every regiment of native infantry and cavalry may be made without any compromise of efficiency. When two companies were reduced in each regiment the former complement of officers remained unaltered. I consider the establishment of European officers in a native regiment to be far more than is necessary, and it is their number and high pay which swell to such an immense amount the military expenditure. Men differ very much as to the proper proportion, some contending that the amount cannot be too great; others, again, that the sepoy army was never in a better state than when there were not more than three or four officers with each corps. I am much inclined to be of this opinion. The connection between European and native officers was much closer, their dependence upon each other greater, and a more cordial intimacy existed between all ranks. I believe the sepoys have never been so good as they were in the earliest part of our career; none superior to those under De Boigne, and at the present day none better than the Nizam's contingent, where the same proportion, I believe, about six officers, is maintained. There is one fact that is universally admitted, that no number of European officers will make a sepoy corps equal to an European regiment, and in my opinion that establishment would be sufficient that allowed the presence of one officer to a company. The saving proposed would go far to meet the charge, in addition to the changes that have been suggested in respect to the Bombay army.

There are two points adverted to in the reports of the Committee that are well deserving of early consideration.

Both the Madras Committee and the Adjutant-General

and Quartermaster-General of the Bengal army have recommended the augmentation of each native centre to 1000 men, without any increase of officers, and I would strongly support its adoption as soon as the finances will allow. It would give great relief to the duty devolving upon all sepoy corps, which is often very harassing and distressing as military duty, and increased by the interference and interruption often caused to their religious customs. This increase would permit the extension of a much valued indulgence, that of furlough, to a much larger proportion of every regiment—say one-fifth, and for a longer period—say a year. I should think it would in any new general regulation be advisable to reduce the amount of pay received during absence. There is at this time a great difference of practice in this respect between the Bengal sepoys and those of Madras and Bombay, to the advantage of the latter.

The same Bengal officers have urged the formation of a portion of the regular regiments into light infantry. As there is not a single chief in India or on the frontier who can resist us in line, an army formed principally for that purpose is in a great degree useless. Within our territories all insurrection must be confined to hills or the jungles. Without we have either the Nepál Hills or the jungles and stockades of Ava, where soldiers well trained in irregular fighting and in the expert use of a light musket can alone be useful. I am of opinion that one cause of the defeat of the two columns in the late Coorg war may be ascribed to the ignorance of both men and officers in this species of warfare, which requires a particular and constant instruction as well as experience.

The irregular cavalry is the arm of all others in India that may be placed on a par with any of the military means that we could command for our defence against foreign invasion—not even excepting the European cavalry. I need not repeat what has been so often stated, that the Rohillas and all the

other highest caste and bravest men in India who will not enter our ranks from dislike to our rigid discipline, and from the fear of personal disrespect from our young inconsiderate officers, have no repugnance to serve in the irregular cavalry. The irregular cavalry is of peculiar importance in India. It is the favourite arm of the native. It attaches him to our service by the strong ties of interest and affection. It prevents his being engaged against us, and if the system were sufficiently extended it would, at a trifling expense, afford us all the advantages, moral and military, which the Russians have derived from the Cossacks, who, from being the bitterest enemies of Russia in the time of Peter the Great, have become the most faithful subjects of the empire. This force should be increased to 20,000 men.

Steam power must be included among the most powerful means of reducing the difficulties of protection and support to such extensive and distant lines of defence and of multiplying the military resources that we already possess. In illustration of the practical use that might be made of this power, I take the liberty of introducing here an opinion that I have elsewhere expressed :—

‘But an efficient marine steam establishment in India is called for by considerations more powerful even than those of commercial advantage or improved political control. It would multiply in a ratio little understood the defensive means of the Empire. Let me advert to an event, the particulars of which are within your recollection, the Burmese war. If five powerful steamers had then been at our command to bring up in quick succession all necessary reinforcements and supplies, the war would probably have terminated in a few months, and many millions of treasure, many thousands of lives, and extraordinary misery and sickness would have been spared. Allow me to submit another estimate of advantage, of the correctness of which you all can likewise judge. The proper station for the principal reserve of our European troops in India is at Bangalore, Madras the place of embarkation. In a few days, at any period of the monsoons, the same five steamers would carry this force to the most distant part of the shores of the Empire. In five weeks with the aid of the river-steamers this reserve wo

reach Allahabad, the most central point of our territories, and one of our most commanding positions. The same steam power that would enable us to baffle any invader in war would be ample in times of peace to carry into complete execution the whole plan of the Bengal Steam Committee, for which I continue to be a decided advocate.'

I will only offer a remark that if such power be provided it should be exclusively appropriated to the transport of troops and to the maintenance of the communication with Europe. From all purposes of less utility—as passage or tug vessels—it should be interdicted as being uselessly expensive, and as affecting without any adequate return of benefit the efficiency and readiness for constant service of the steam machinery.

I shall only now take the liberty of suggesting the advantage that would accrue from including the military establishments of Ceylon in those entertained for the defence of our Indian Empire. Ceylon could well spare one regiment of infantry, which would be *pro tanto* a relief to her finances. For the ordinary duties of the colony a sepoy corps at one half of the expense would probably answer every purpose, and in case of more urgent service the regiment at Trichinopoli might be held at the disposal of the Government of Ceylon, and would be able to cross the straits in a very short time. The Ceylon regiment, if stationed at Bangalore, would be of much more extended benefit, could march down to replace the Trichinopoli regiment if necessary, and could move on to Ceylon in case of increasing urgency. There is a Malay corps in Ceylon, an element of defence not known in our Indian establishment, and which might be most usefully employed in our provinces on the Eastern coast, and perhaps in the Lower Provinces, which are so hateful to the up-country sepoy. If the experiment succeeded, this corps would afford a nucleus for the foundation of a larger force. It is a great desideratum in our military arrangements, the obtaining a mode of defence for Bengal proper at once efficient for the State and satisfactory to the individuals employed. I had

much conversation with Sir Edward Barnes on the subject. I possess, indeed, a written memorandum from him strongly concurring in the view here taken, but I cannot immediately lay my hand upon it.

I regret that these observations should have run to such extreme length, but no one before me has had the opportunity of a season of peace to reflect upon the alterations that the union of our Presidencies into one Government, and of our territories into one Empire, imperatively call for. It would have ill become me, upon a subject so momentous as the safety of this great possession, to have been prevented by any motive of delicacy from the full development of my opinion. I fearlessly pronounce the Indian army to be the least efficient and most expensive in the world. The realisation of the hypothesis with which I started, of the presence of 20,000 Russian infantry on the Indus, with its accompanying multitudes, would now find us in a state utterly unable to resist them. The national resources at home might possibly rescue us from the impending ruin, but we must recollect that we are not likely to have again the same large armies to supply us with great reinforcements, and that men recruited for the occasion would be very inefficient and quite inadequate to bear the effects of the climate.

But even if we could command this aid, it would be utterly inexcusable if, with ample time for preparation, with the sum of ten millions sterling appropriated to our military establishments, we were not able to secure ourselves against every calculable danger.

W. C. BENTINCK.

Calcutta, March 13th, 1835.

## CHAPTER X

### END OF INDIAN CAREER AND LIFE

THE Indian career of Lord William Bentinck has now been considered in all its bearings, and an attempt has been made to explain the influence he exercised over the development of British power in India. Considering that he had wielded authority in that country for a period of nearly seven years under circumstances of great anxiety, it is not surprising to find that his health suffered during the last few months of his stay there, but we cannot suppose that this fact greatly shortened his tenure of power, which, with the exception of Lord Hastings and Lord Dalhousie, was longer than that of any Governor-General in this century. His departure on 20th March, 1835, in the full height of his reputation, and when the task of reform in India had reached its end, not to be taken up for another generation, contrasted with the circumstances of his sudden and enforced exit from Madras in 1807. Even the sore feeling in the Services from his interference with what were regarded as cherished perquisites did not prevent their cordial expression of the opinion that he had done good work in India, and

that his administration formed an epoch in the history of our government of the country. Among the natives the feeling of regret was naturally more acute, and found louder expression because in him they lost the friend and vindicator who, first among their English rulers, held out to them the prospect of equal rights and an honourable share in the government. Expression was given to their gratitude by the statue erected by public (and chiefly native) subscription to his memory, which forms a prominent ornament of the city of Calcutta, and which bears an inscription<sup>1</sup> prepared by his friend and coadjutor, Macaulay.

Lord William Bentinck went to India as a reformer, and he fully and honourably realised the character in which he was sent out by the East India Company.

<sup>1</sup> The following is the full text of this inscription :—

To

WILLIAM CAVENDISH BENTINCK,

who during seven years ruled India with eminent prudence,  
 integrity, and benevolence ;  
 who, placed at the head of a great Empire, never laid aside the  
 simplicity and moderation of a private citizen ;  
 who infused into Oriental despotism the spirit of British freedom ;  
 who never forgot that the end of government is  
 the happiness of the governed ;  
 who abolished cruel rites ;  
 who effaced humiliating distinctions ;  
 who gave liberty to the expression of public opinion ;  
 whose constant study it was to elevate the intellectual and  
 moral character of the nation committed to his charge.

This Monument

was erected by men  
 who, differing in race, in manners, in language, and in religion,  
 cherish with equal veneration and gratitude  
 the memory of his wise, reforming, and paternal administration.



He began his work by placing the impaired finances of the Indian Government on a firm and satisfactory basis, not merely by converting a deficit into a surplus, but by effecting permanent economies and creating new sources of revenue. He carried out several great measures of reform which were necessary, not only in the interests of governed and governing, but also in order to demonstrate the earnest desire of the Company to consider the welfare of its subjects. He was the first to put in practice the loftier ideal of Indian government, which had insensibly grown up after the Warren Hastings trial.

If Lord William Bentinck had many admirers, it is not surprising, considering the acts of his administration, to find that he had also enemies and detractors. No one can forcibly reform the established order of things without incurring the enmity of those who are interfered with, and Lord William Bentinck certainly interfered with a good many people. Perhaps the writer who gave the most extreme expression to these injured feelings was Mr. Thornton in his *History*, concluding a long indictment of Bentinck's administration with an attack on his personal character, in which he said there was 'added the treachery of the Italian to the caution of the Dutchman<sup>1</sup>.' But it is strange to find a writer like Greville, who was a shrewd judge of human character, and who was, moreover, Bentinck's own nephew, giving expression to what was

<sup>1</sup> A forcible and eloquent reply to Thornton's attack was published in the first volume of the *Calcutta Review*, and deserves to be read.

after all the antipathy to Lord William Bentinck felt by a very small class in India. We may assume that it was rather prejudice caused by his home politics, than objection to Bentinck's work in India, that led him to pen the following lines as his summing up of the character of his uncle:—

‘He is a man whose success in life has been greater than his talents warrant, for he is not right-headed, and has committed some great blunder or other in every public situation in which he has been placed, but he is simple in his habits, popular in his manners, liberal in his opinions, and magnificently hospitable in his mode of life. These qualities are enough to ensure popularity.’

The most unfriendly critics of Lord William Bentinck have not ventured to deny that he accomplished the work entrusted to him, and that he satisfactorily solved the problems which came before him. Their criticism is not directed against the manner of the worker, but against the work itself. The decision to diminish the expense of government, to give the governed a larger share in it, and to elevate it for the benefit of the millions in India and the English reputation, was come to because those steps could be no longer put off. They originated not with Lord William Bentinck so much as in England under the pressure of an aroused, if still sluggish, public opinion, and if they had not been carried out by an officer of the East India Company, the neglect would have entailed the speedier fall of that institution and the transfer of its duties to the British Crown and Parliament.

But there is no justification for the loose statement so frequently made that the object of Lord William Bentinck was to facilitate the transfer of the government from English to native hands. He saw clearly, and long before he was Governor-General, that the administrative services would have to be recruited from the natives, and he recognised on principle the justice of this measure. He carried out what he approved, and what the Company itself saw to be necessary, in an expeditious and practical manner that provided an enduring and satisfactory remedy for the difficulty. Every subsequent step taken by the Government of India in the extension of the branches open to the natives of the country has been the direct consequence of Lord William Bentinck's policy. We have been told very often that this was a misfortune rather than a benefit, and that by so doing the seeds were planted of our overthrow. The prediction may be verified at some remote date, as to which no one but a rash prophet will attempt now to vaticinate.

But what would have been the stability of the English position in India if we had persisted in governing the country with a mere handful of our own officials, excluding the native from all superior administrative work, and either augmenting our expenses or diminishing our revenue in accordance as we kept many or few European officials? It would be going too far to assert that to-day there would not be a British India at all. We content our selves by

saying that it would be a British India of which we should have less reason to be proud than of that which exists, and also that it would be less secure.

Very little consideration was necessary to prove to thoughtful persons that two hundred millions of people, composed of many highly intelligent and spirited races, could not be kept permanently in a state of subjection without either voice or share in their own government. There is no instance in history of any race of capable conquerors having attempted so hopeless a task, and all Lord William Bentinck did was to prove that the Company, having thrown aside its commercial character, was prepared to discharge its duties as a purely governing body in a worthy manner. It was impossible to accomplish this task without giving umbrage to influential classes, and the completeness of Lord William Bentinck's success was certainly calculated to embitter the feeling against him among the old servants of the Company. But the allegation that his policy was calculated to undermine British power in India is one that will not bear examination.

It was indispensable. By enabling the revenues of India to meet all the charges of a foreign government he added to the strength and durability of our position in India, and his anxiety to augment our military forces in the country, and to oppose a Russian advance on India with a suitable foreign policy, showed that he would be no party to anything tending to weaken our hold upon the country. The

more carefully Lord William Bentinck's Indian career is considered, the more evident will it appear that his part in consolidating British authority in India was a great and honourable one. To him we feel it to be due that the peoples of India were first convinced that a main factor in our policy was a disinterested desire for their own welfare.

The closing years of Lord William Bentinck's life, which was not long extended after the termination of his Indian administration, only call for brief notice. After his return to England in the autumn of 1835 he was offered a peerage, which he declined, partly because he had no children to inherit a title, and partly because he wished to return to active political life in the House of Commons. In the election of 1837 he was elected Member for the city of Glasgow in the Liberal interest. He spent a good deal of his time in France, where his Palermo friend of more than twenty years before had become Louis Philippe, King of the French, and he died at Paris on June 17, 1839, at the age of 65. The part of his life-work which will endure was performed in India, and although to him fell less of the pomp and circumstance of war which has formed so prominent a feature of our history in that country, and more of unattractive internal reform, he can never be excluded from the list of eminent rulers who made India a British possession, and who have kept it so, as much by the tacit assent of the subject population as by superior force.

# INDEX



ABERCROMBY, Sir R., 17.  
 ACHESON, Lady Mary, 17.  
 ADAM, Sir Frederick, 47.  
 ADIGE, passage of, 17.  
 AKBAR, 166.  
 ALCOY, 47.  
 ALEPPO, 172.  
 ALLAHÁBÁD, 61.  
 ALVES, Major, 143.  
 AMHERST, Lord, 53, 54, 55, 57,  
     84-5, 140, 145, 147.  
 AMIENS, Treaty of, 17.  
 ANSTRUTHER, A., 26.  
 AUSTRIAN ARMY, tribute to, 16 n.  
  
 BÁRAKZÁIS, the, 170.  
 BARLOW, Sir George, 28.  
 BARNES, Sir E., 147.  
 BARRACKPUR, 58.  
 BATHURST, Captain, 36 n.  
 BATTÁ, 56: meaning of word, 57,  
     58, 59.  
 BAYLEY, W. B., 55, 67.  
 BELLEGARDE, Marshal, 51 n.  
 BENGAL, 62, 64.  
 BENTINCK FAMILY, the, 13, 14.  
 BENTINCK, Hans William, Earl  
     of Portland, 14.  
 BENTINCK, Lady William, 17,  
     148.  
 BENTINCK, Lord William Henry  
     Cavendish, birth of, 15: early  
     military career, 15-16: attached  
     to Suwarrow's army, 16: at Mar-  
     engo, &c., *ibid.*: opinion of Aus-  
     trian army, 16 n.: appointed to  
     command cavalry in Egypt, 17:

marries Lady Mary Acheson,  
*ibid.*: nominated Governor of  
 Madras, *ibid.*: reaches Madras,  
 19: correspondence with Mar-  
 quis Wellesley, 20-21: enun-  
 ciates his views on Indian  
 Government, 22: his opinion of  
 possibility of French descent  
 on Madras and Ceylon, 23: holds  
 Sir Thomas Munro's opinion on  
 land question, 24-25: dispute  
 with Chief Justice, 25-27: his  
 differences with Members of  
 Council, 27-28: his name sug-  
 gested for Governor-General-  
 ship, 28: his relations with  
 Court, 29 n.: consulted by Sir  
 John Cradock on first Mutiny  
 at Vellore, 32-3: cancels ob-  
 jectionable orders, 34: censured  
 by Court, 35: removed from  
 office, 36: returns to England,  
 36 n.: his regard for his friends,  
 37: presents Memorial to  
 Court, 37-8: publishes Me-  
 morial, 38 n.: returns to mili-  
 tary work, 40: sent on special  
 mission to Madrid, *ibid.*: com-  
 mands a brigade at Corunna,  
 41: appointed to command in  
 Sicily, 42: Napier's estimate of  
 his character, 43: organises  
 army in Sicily, *ibid.*: arranges a  
 new Constitution for the island,  
 44-5: entertains a scheme from  
 Russian Admiral Tchighachoff,  
 46: favours project of emanci-

- pating Italy, 46-7: sends expedition to Eastern Spain, 47: lands at Leghorn with small army, 48: his proclamation at Genoa, 49: his relations with Louis Philippe, *ibid.*: his convention with Prince Francis, 50: his policy in Italy, 50-52: his relations with Austrian notabilities, 51 *n.*: refused permission to land at Naples, 52: resides at Florence, *ibid.*: member for Lynn, 53: offered and refuses Governorship of Madras, *ibid.*: applies for Governor-Generalship, *ibid.*: James Mill's opinion of him, 54: selected as Governor-General, *ibid.*: arrives in India, 55: ordered to reduce Batta, 56: his proceedings on that subject, 56-59: forbids press to comment on Court's decree, 60: effects various economies, *ibid.*: institutes reductions in army, 61: his arrangements about Málwá opium, 62: turns deficit of one million into a surplus of two millions, 63: his relations with Sir Charles Metcalfe, 65-68: receives Lord Ellenborough's despatch, 67: takes in hand suppression of thags, 68: his measures, 75: abolishes widow-burning, 77 *et seq.*: receives letter on *Sati* from Lord Hastings, 84: his decision, 86: addresses confidential letter to officers, 87: his perfect confidence as to abolition, 90: his Minute on *Sati*, 96-111: Lord Lansdowne's tribute to, 126-7: character of his rule, 129: forbids presents to or by servants of the company, 130: his policy towards Native States, 131: corresponds with the Nizam, 133: withdraws control from Haiderábád, *ibid.*: his policy in Maisore, 134-5: directs campaign in Coorg, 136: visits Lucknow, 139: his despatches on condition of Oudh, *ibid.*: establishes sanitarium at Simla, 145: and at Darjiling, *ibid.*: his desire to see things for himself, *ibid.*: issues first 4 p.c. loan, 147: assumes command of the army, *ibid.*: character of Lady William, 148: supports English education, 157-8: his Resolution of March, 1835, 159-160: his Press policy, 161-2: his policy in India, 163: his foreign policy, 166: negotiates with Amirs of Sind, 168: his interview with Ranjít Singh, 169: interest in Singapur, 171-2: supports overland route, 172-3: reviews position in India, 174: full text of his Minute on the subject, 177-201: leaves India, 202: statue to, 203 and *n.*: his work in India, 205-7: elected member for Glasgow, 208: his death at Paris, *ibid.*
- BERHAMPUR, 58.  
BHARTPUR, 55.  
BIRD, R. M., 61.  
BLAKE, Mr., murder of, 143.  
BLAQUIERE, 44 *n.*  
BOARD OF CONTROL, 115.  
BOKHARA, 166.  
BOMBAY, 62.  
BOURBONS, the Neapolitan, 42, 45.  
BURNES, Sir Alexander, 168.  
BURRELL, Sir Harry, 40.  
BUSSORA, 172.
- CALCUTTA, 55, 65, 68: commercial crisis at, 146-7.  
CALCUTTA COLLEGE, the, 150.  
CALCUTTA GOVERNMENT GAZETTE, 90, 128.  
CALCUTTA REVIEW, the, 204 *n.*  
CAMBRIDGE, Duke of, 52.  
CAMPBELL, 171.  
CANTON, 118.  
CASTLEREAGH, Lord, 29 *n.*, 52.  
CATALONIA, 44, 46, 47, 51.

- CAVENDISH, Lady Dorothy, 15.  
 'CERHALUS,' the, 44 n.  
 CEYLON, 23.  
 CHANDU LALL, 134.  
 CHARLES THE SECOND, 114.  
 CHARTER of East India Company, the, 9-11, 112, 113: Queen Elizabeth's Charter, 114: James' and others, *ibid.*: length of renewals, 115: withdrawal of monopoly of Indian trade, 115: public opinion on Chinese monopoly, 116: Chinese monopoly to cease, 117: financial consequences of loss of Chinese monopoly, 119-25: terms of renewal of, 124: debate in Parliament, 125-6: royal assent, 126.  
 CHINA, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119.  
 CHITOR, 73.  
 CLIVE, second Lord, 19.  
 COLLIN, M., 24.  
 COLVIN, Russell, 150.  
 COMBERMERE, Lord, 55.  
 COMMITTEE of 1853, 160.  
 COMMITTEES of inquiry, 61.  
 COMMONS, House of, 113: Committee of, 116-7: debate in, 125.  
 COORG, 134: the mad Rájá of, 136: war with, *ibid.*: annexation of, *ibid.*  
 COOTE, Eyre, 30.  
 CORNWALLIS, Marquis, 24, 64, 80, 148.  
 CORSICA, 52.  
 CORUNNA, 41.  
 COURT OF DIRECTORS, and Vellore Mutiny, 35-9.  
 COURTS, the Provincial, 63.  
 CRADOCK, Sir John, 31, 32, 33.  
 CROMWELL, Oliver, 114.  
 DALRYMPLE, Sir Hew, 40.  
 DAMÁN, 62.  
 DARJILING, purchase of, 145.  
 DELHI, King of (the Great Mogul), 137: sends emissary to England, *ibid.*  
 DINÁPUR, 58.  
 'DITCH OF DELHI,' the, 166.  
 DUU, 62.  
 DOST MUHAMMAD, 170, 171.  
 DUM-DUM, 58.  
 DWARAKANATH TAGORE, 79.  
 EAST INDIA COMPANY, 78: its dividend, 119, 122, 123, 124, 125: national services of, 128-9.  
 ECCLESIASTICAL ESTABLISHMENT, 115.  
 EDUCATION, rival schools of, 149.  
 EGYPT, 172, 173.  
 ELIZABETH, Queen, 114.  
 ELLENBOROUGH, Lord, 67, 116, 126.  
 ENGLISH, use of, 149, 150, 151, 157: its consequences, 158-9, 160.  
 'ENTERPRISE,' the, 173.  
 FORT ST. GEORGE, 17, 19, 53.  
 FRANCIS D'ESTE, Archduke, 51 n.  
 FRASER, murder of Mr., 137.  
 FRENCH, the, 23.  
 GANGES, 78, 81.  
 GENOA, 48, 49.  
 GEORGE THE FOURTH, 116.  
 GHÁZÍPUR, 58.  
 GLASGOW, 208.  
 GOSFORD, Earl of, 17.  
 GRANT, Charles (Lord Glenelg), 125.  
 GREVILLE, Mr. Charles, 92 and n., 148, 204, 205.  
 GROTE, Mrs., 53.  
 GWALIOR, 74.  
 GWILLIM, Sir Henry, 25, 26, 27.  
 HAIDAR ALI, 30, 132.  
 HAIDARÁBÁD, 74, 132, 147.  
 HAMILTON, Lady, 44.  
 HASTINGS, Marquis of, 53, 57: letter from, 84, 148.  
 HASTINGS, Warren, 8, 112, 150.  
 HERÁT, 166.  
 HOUGHTON, Colonel, 20.  
 HOME REMITTANCES, question of, 120.





- with Lord, 132; proposed alliance with Lord Willingdon, 133 and *n.*
- NIJAM, the, present relations, power and of, 147.
- NIJAMAT ADARAT, 81, 82, 83.
- NORTH-WEST PROVINCE, 61.
- NOVA, 16.
- NIGRIST, Prince, 48, 51 *n.*
- OAKLEY, Thomas, 27, 28.
- OLIVER, 62, 63.
- OLDHAM, 47.
- ORIENTALISTS, the, 151, 158.
- ORRIS, 74: kind of, 175: proposition to assume control of, 170: vindication of Lord Dalhousie's policy in, *ibid.*
- OVERLAND ROUTE, the, 172-4.
- PALERMO, 45, 49.
- PALMER & Co., 147.
- PARIS, 208.
- PASSPORTS IN INDIA, 24.
- PATILAYA, Maharaja of, refuses interest on loan, 144: tells tale of Simla, *ibid.*
- PEEL, Sir R., 116.
- PELLEW, Sir E., 56 *n.*
- PENANG, 172.
- PITHEE, William, 37.
- PHANSA, 69.
- PHANSI-GAN, 69.
- 'PITT,' the, 56 *n.*
- PONDICHERY, 23.
- PORTLAND, third Duke of, 15.
- PORTO NOVO, 30.
- PRESS, the, in India, 59 and *n.*, 161-2.
- PRINSEPS, the, 149.
- PRIVY COUNCIL, the, 91, 92.
- PURNAYYA, 134.
- RAFFLES, Sir Stamford, 171.
- RAMMOHUN ROY, 79, 137.
- RANJIT SINGH, 56: growth of his power, 166: mission to, 167: dispute with, 168: second mission to, 168-9: Lord William's interview with, 169: helps Shāh Shuja, 171: his old Afghan expedition, 172.
- RAYCHAND, 152.
- RHEIN, Lord, 129.
- ROBE, 172.
- ROBINSON & W., 147.
- ROBINSON, 169.
- ROBINSON, 169: for use by Governor-General, 169, 177, 181-3, 190, 201.
- SADU APINO, 64.
- SADU DEWANI, and NIJAMAT ADARAT, court of, 64.
- SAGAL, 138.
- SAGARMO, 16.
- SALA, 77: practice of, 78: practice meaning of, 78 *n.*: English attitude towards, 78-9: Russell, 80: proposed abolition, 81: the police and, 82: number of cases, 83: prevalence in Fenzal army, 84, 87: official view of, 85: 'crime of multiplied murder,' 86: only reason for delay in suppressing it, 88: opinion of the Judges about, 89: of the police, 89-90: regulations as to *Sala*, 90-1: isolated cases of, 91: referred to Privy Council, 91-2 and *n.*, 93, 94: policy of its suppression, 94-6: Minute on, 96-111.
- SEROYS, of Madras, 30: orders issued to, 31.
- SHERAFAT, 170.
- SHORE'S Notes on Indian Affairs, 93, 146.
- SHUJA UL MULK, exile in India, 168: forms alliance with Ranjit, *ibid.*: sets out to recover Afghanistan, 170: his quarrel with Sind Amirs, *ibid.*: defeated at Kandahār, 171: returns to India, *ibid.*
- SICILY, 42, 43: new constitution in, 45.
- SIKANDER JAH, Nizam, 133.
- SIKKIM, Raja of, 145.

- SIMLA, acquisition and growth of, 144-5.  
 SIND, Amirs of, 168, 170.  
 SINGAPUR, 171-2.  
 SLEEMAN, Major, 73, 74.  
 SMITH, F. C., 73, 75.  
 SPEZIA, 48.  
 STEWART, Colonel, 74.  
 STRANGE, Robert, 27.  
 SUCHET, Marshal, 47, 51.  
 SUTLEJ, 166, 169.  
 SUWARROW, Marshal, 16.  
 SYDENHAM, Captain, 21.
- TAVERNIER, 69, 72.  
 TCHIGHACHOFF, Admiral, 46, 47.  
 THAGÍ, 68 : history of, *ibid.*  
 THAGS, the, meaning of name, 69 :  
   their mode of proceeding, 69-71 :  
   their increased numbers, 71-3 :  
   steps against, 73-5 : number  
   arrested, 74 : break-up of fra-  
   ternity, 75.  
 THORNTON'S HISTORY, 204 and *n.*  
 TILSIT, 40.  
 TIPÚ SULTÁN, family of, 29, 30,  
   34, 35, 132, 134.  
 TITCHFIELD, Lord, 27.  
 TORRI, Alessandro, 49.
- TREBBIA, 16.  
 TREVELYAN, Sir Charles, 12, 150,  
   160.  
 UTAKAMAND, 136, 145.
- VELLORE, its position, 29 : first  
   Mutiny at, 32 : dragoons sent  
   to, *ibid.* : second Mutiny at, 33  
   and *n.* : court-martial at, 34 :  
   commission of inquiry at, 34.
- WADWAN, 168.  
 WAGHORN, Mr., 173.  
 WANDIWASH, 30.  
 WELLESLEY, Sir Arthur, 19, 41 :  
   *see* WELLINGTON.  
 WELLESLEY, Marquis, 20, 21, 22,  
   81, 126.  
 WELLINGTON, Duke of, 46, 50, 51,  
   59, 126.  
 WIDOW-BURNING, 77 : *see* *Satt.*  
 WILLIAM THE THIRD, 114.  
 WILLIAM THE FOURTH, 168.  
 WILSON'S BRITISH INDIA, 78 *n.*,  
   116.  
 WILSON, Colonel, his history of  
   the Madras army. 33 *n.*  
 WILSON, Mr., 74.

